THE

HISTORY OF THE REVIVAL AND PROGRESS

OF

INDEPENDENCY

IN ENGLAND,

SINCE THE PERIOD OF THE REFORMATION;

WITH

AN INTRODUCTION, CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PRINCIPLES OF INDEPENDENCY IN THE AGE OF CHRIST AND HIS APOSTLES, AND OF THE GRADUAL DEPARTURE OF THE CHURCH INTO ANTICHRISTIAN ERROR, UNTIL THE TIME OF THE REFORMATION.

BY

JOSEPH FLETCHER,

Editor of the "Select Works and Memoirs of the late Dr. Fletcher," Author of "Six Views of Infidelity," &c.

VOL. III.

LONDON:
JOHN SNOW, 35, PATERNOSTER ROW.
MDCCCXLVIII.

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OF THE

THIRD VOLUME

OF

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CHAPTER I.

CONTROVERSIES AMONGST THE INDEPENDENTS IN EXILE.

THE period at which we have arrived was one of much controversy between the Independents themselves. Enjoying the freedom that Divine Providence had provided for them on the soil of Holland, they were at leisure to examine into the details of their own principles, and soon began to discover ground for differences of opinion on many minor but important matters.

Unhappily these differences became the subject of angry debate. Having escaped from Egypt, the brethren fell out amongst themselves. "Wars and fightings" arose, where all ought to have been peace; and the elements of an unholy strife entered into discussions which ought to have been conducted with calmness and mutual forbearance. This, however, is the only thing to be regretted; since the controversies that arose were inevitable, either at that or some after period, and were fraught with consequences much more important than the temporary animosity they occasioned. Valuable treatises that would not otherwise have seen the light, and containing truths of the highest moment, were composed amidst the excitement of the conflict; and the very exaggeration of party views afforded succeeding generations

abundant materials for forming an enlightened judgment respecting the points at issue. The discussions of this period between such men as Johnson, Robinson, Ainsworth, Smyth, Helwisse, and others, tended, more than anything else, to the advanced knowledge and settled convictions of a later age.

In devoting this chapter to an account of these controversies, it is not our intention to dwell upon matters of mere detail, or upon topics of minor importance. A general indication of the differences that arose, and of the manner in which they were discussed, is all that we aim at.

The first of these has been referred to already at the close of the last chapter. The baptismal controversy which originated with the Reformation, has divided the Christian world more or less ever since. The question respecting the mode of baptism has generally been considered subordinate to that which respects the proper subjects of the rite. Both questions, however, have in various periods become the matter of fierce contention amongst Christians otherwise agreeing with one another. Previous to the period now referred to, the baptists, under the name of anabaptists, suffered much in consequence of their peculiar sentiments. Instead of admitting them to a fair hearing, the self-constituted orthodox made a practice of stigmatising them every where, and adopted the most violent measures for their suppression. The apparent exclusiveness of the sentiments professed by the baptists, was no doubt a principal cause of the opposition they met with. If Independency, under the names of Brownism and Barrowism, was considered exclusive, because it admitted accredited Christians alone to church fellow-

ship; much more was anabaptistry deemed exclusive, for the additional reason that it allowed no man to be a Christian, worthy of fellowship, until he was baptized as an adult believer in Jesus Christ. If Independency was persecuted because it cast a slur upon the all-comprehending and worldly constitution of existing national churches; anabaptistry was even more violently persecuted, because it gave such a meaning to the rite of baptism, as unchurched all the nominal churches of Christendom. It would be foreign to our purpose to enter at large upon the merits of the baptismal controversy of this period. A few remarks, however, are needful to a proper understanding of the relative position of the various parties.

In the period to which we now refer, baptism was regarded by all parties too much as a rite of a positive nature based upon its own merits, rather than as a part of a consistent and harmonious system. Hence, while the churches of Rome and England regarded water baptism as essential to, or at least co-ordinate with, spiritual baptism; those who were too enlightened to fall into this error, went to the opposite extreme of regarding water baptism as a sign and seal of spiritual baptism, actually or virtually received. The former invested the rite with a mysterious efficacy, utterly inconsistent with the genius of a spiritual dispensation; the latter rendered it a formal ceremony better suited to the Levitical than the Christian economy. We are not aware of any parties who at this period took any other than these views; although in the discussions which arose, gleams of purer light are sometimes discernible, which, if followed up, might have led to the apprehension of the truth. The churches of the Reformation, the Puri-

tans, and the Independents, generally speaking, adopted the latter view. The theory by which they explained the meaning of the baptismal rite, was one which would have sanctioned the reinforcement of all the ritual observances of Judaism. If baptism was performed as the sign of a spiritual baptism actually enjoyed, why not restore Aaron's priesthood, sacrifices, and service, as signs of the priesthood, sacrifice and work of Christ? True, the evangelical party occupied more harmless ground than that of the churches of Rome and England; but one quite as untenable, and one which prepared the way for the anabaptists of an earlier, and the quakers of a later period. Had they been able to perceive that water baptism was intended to be illustrative merely, having an objective reference to the design of a spiritual dispensation, and a subjective reference to all catechumens under it, whether by voluntary discipleship in the case of adults, or by hereditary introduction to the same virtual position in the case of children; had this been perceived, we should never have heard of the differences that arose amongst the evangelical nonconformists of this period.* They would have consolidated their power against the gross perversions of the Roman and Anglican churches; and the Independents would never have been broken up into two parties.

As it was, certain individuals soon arose amongst the Independents in Holland, who saw the inconsistency of the theory of baptism, advocated by the evangelical party of that day, with the baptism of

* Those who desire to see the present state of the baptismal controversy, are referred to the recent works of Dr. Wardlaw, Dr. Halley, and the Rev. Charles Stovel. Dr. Wardlaw and Mr. Stovel represent the old views; Dr. Halley the modern.

children. Instead of enquiring whether the theory was correct, they asked whether it was possible for infants to exercise faith; and concluding in the negative, they decided against the baptism of infants. The pædo-baptists might plead an exception in favour of infants on the ground of the Abrahamic covenant, and the analogy between circumcision and baptism; but this did not satisfy their minds. The baptists, still adhering to the erroneous theory of the evangelical party, saw no alternative but that of refusing outward baptism to all who were not spiritually baptized and prepared to profess their faith in Christ. They went even further than this: they came to regard baptism as the mode of admission to church fellowship, and the very basis of church organization. From this time pædo-baptist Independents, and anti-pædo-baptist Independents, became two parties; the former being known at a later period as Independents, and the latter as Baptists.

The principal parties engaged in this controversy, which was prolonged for a considerable period, were Smyth, Helwisse, and Murton on the baptist side, and Johnson, Clyfton, Robinson, and Ainsworth, on the other.

Smyth was in many respects a remarkable man. It is said that he went over from England to Amsterdam in the hope of being able to convert Johnson from "the errors of his rigid separation." * If such was his object, it must be admitted that he failed, since he became one of the most rigid separatists himself. According to the testimony of one who knew him, "he first fell into some errors about the

* Cotton's Way, p. 7; Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, p. 52.

Scriptures, and so into some opposition with Mr. Johnson, who had been his tutor, and the church at Amsterdam. But he was convinced of them by the pains and faithfulness of Mr. Johnson and Mr. Ainsworth, and revoked them; but afterwards was drawn away by some of the Dutch anabaptists, who finding him to be a good scholar and unsettled, they easily misled the most of his people, and others of them scattered away. He lived not many years after, but died there of a consumption, to which he was inclined before he came out of England."* Many testimonies might be adduced from the writings of his opponents respecting his instability; and to these may be added that of Helwisse, in a work published in 1611, in which he writes of him as a "fallen" man, and compares him to Balaam.† At the same time, much allowance should be made for him, in consequence of the unsettled state of things in relation to many important matters. On some points he was in advance of those who were in other respects his superiors, as we shall endeavour to show in another place. According to some he died at Leyden, in 1610; according to others, at Amsterdam, in 1614.‡

Helwisse was another writer of importance in this controversy. Before the death of Smyth he was regarded as a leader of the baptist party, and repaired to England, in all probability, as early as 1611-12. In 1611, he published a work, one object of which was to prove that "no infants are condemned;" and has been supposed to have been the principal party to

* Governor Bradford's Dialogue, in Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrims, p. 450, 451.

† An Advertisement, &c., quoted by Hanbury, i. 418.

‡ Cotton says, "At Leyden he never came," Way, p. 7.

the drawing up "The Declaration of Faith" of the independent baptists of Amsterdam. His reasons for leaving Amsterdam and settling in London, have been variously interpreted. Modern baptists writers, somewhat partial towards one of their early advocates, have set him forth as a hero "actuated by motives at once pure and exalted;" * while his contemporaries were perhaps too much influenced by the prejudices which a difference of sentiments engenders. If he had been content to repair to England simply declaring that under existing circumstances he was convinced it was his duty to do so, no one would have blamed him. But this did not satisfy him. He must needs turn dictator to such men as Robinson, Ainsworth, Johnson, and others, asserting that it was their duty to follow his example, and terming them, "false-hearted leaders" when they refused. It is scarcely to be wondered at, that Robinson should meet this charge of recreancy, as he did in the following terms:—

"The truth is, it was Mr. Helwisse who, above all, either guides or others, furthered this passage into strange countries, and if any brought oars he brought sails, as I could show in many particulars, and as all that are acquainted with the manner of our coming over can witness with me. Neither is it likely, if he and the people with him at Amsterdam could have gone on comfortably as they desired, that the *unlawfulness* of flight would ever have troubled him. But more than likely it is, that having scattered the people by his heady and indiscreet courses, and otherwise disabled himself, that natural confidence which abounded in him took occasion, under an

* Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, p. 90.

appearance of spiritual courage, to press him upon those desperate courses which he of late hath run. By which he might also think it his glory to dare and challenge King and State to their faces, and not to give way to them, no, not a foot; as indeed it far better agrees with a bold and haughty stomach thus to do, than with the apostle in the base 'infirmity' of Christ, to be 'let down through a wall in a basket,' and to run away. Where he saith, that the cities where we are neither receive us nor the word we bring, otherwise than they receive Turks and Jews, he speaks very untruly both of them and us, as, were it of use, I could show evidently. . . . . . As we, then, shall perceive either our flying or our abiding to be meet for God's glory and the good of men, especially of our family and those nearest unto us; and for our own furtherance in holiness; and as we have strength to wade through the dangers of persecutions; so we are with good conscience to use the one or other: which our hope and comfort also are, we have done in these our days of sorrow; some of us coming over by banishment, and others otherwise."* This was the right spirit, and neither Helwisse nor any one else had any warrant to prescribe what course the exiles should follow. "God's glory and the good of men" were the pole-star of the pastor of the Leyden people, as their subsequent history fully proves. Helwisse's church in London was soon scattered; but Robinson's

* Of Religious Communion, Private and Public; with the silencing of the clamours raised by Mr. Thomas Helwisse against our retaining the baptism received in England, and administering of baptism unto infants; as also a survey of the Confession of Faith, published in certain conclusions, by the remainders of Mr. Smyth's company: by John Robinson (1614), pp. 41—45.

church laid the foundation of a mighty empire in the new world.

It would occupy too much space to mention the various publications issued by these parties on the one hand, and by Johnson, Clyfton, Ainsworth and Robinson on the other. Suffice it to say, that while none of them were wanting in ability, Ainsworth's and Robinson's generally bore the palm. With the views we have already expressed, it may be inferred that we deem none of them satisfactory. On particular points of the controversy, however, Robinson and Ainsworth were very successful. The reply of Robinson to Helwisse is, in many respects, a masterly production, and will be referred to again in connection with another subject. In opposition to Smyth, who made baptism the basis of the church's constitution, he argues, that "the church is not gathered, nor men thereinto admitted, by baptism. The church is not given to baptism, but baptism, on the contrary, to the church. John baptized many, but yet gathered no churches; living and dying a member of the Jewish church." The following passage on the same subject is interesting both in an historical and argumentative point of view. It refers to a matter already mentioned in the last volume.

"If the church be gathered by baptism, then will Mr. Helwisse's church appear to all men to be built upon the sand, considering the baptism it had and hath, which was, as I have heard from themselves, on this manner. Mr. Smyth, Mr. Helwisse, and the rest, having utterly dissolved and disclaimed their former church state and ministry, came together to erect a new church by baptism; unto which they also ascribed so great virtue as that they would not so

much as pray together before they had it. And after some straining of courtesy who should begin, Mr. Smyth baptized first himself, and next Mr. Helwisse, and so the rest, making their particular confessions. Now, to let pass his not sanctifying a public action by public prayer, his taking 'unto himself' that 'honour' which was not given him either immediately from Christ or by the church; his baptizing himself, which was more than Christ himself did;—I demand, into what church he entered by baptism? Or, entering by baptism into no church, how his baptism could be true, by their own doctrine? Or, Mr. Smyth's baptism not being true, nor he by it entering into any church, how Mr. Helwisse's baptism could be true; or into what church he entered by it?" *

In connection with the general question, an important point arose respecting the duty of rebaptizing. Most of the exiles had been baptized in infancy according to the rites of the church of England. Smyth and Helwisse not only urged their peculiar views in respect to the exclusion of all but believers from the rite of baptism; they also pressed upon the Independents and all separatists, the duty of renouncing the baptism of England by being baptized over again. Much might be said for and against such a practice. We believe the conclusion at which the Independents arrived was, on the whole, the right one. They refused to be re-baptized. "We retain," said Robinson, "not the baptism of Babylon, but the baptism of the Lord in itself, and by the Babylonians usurped and profaned, but by faith and the Spirit now sanctified to our use. As well may the doctrines of faith there ministered, and thence brought by us, be

* Of Religious Communion, p. 48.

called stolen bread of Babylon, as baptism the 'stolen waters of Babylon.'" Ainsworth took the same view. "God's ordinance," said he, "being turned into an idol or a lie, the idol is to be renounced, but the truth of the ordinance retained. Water, in popish baptism, is God's good creature; antichrist hath turned it, and the action with it, into an abominable idol. This abomination we reject; but the creature of God is of his grace sanctified unto us, and we retain it."

This last extract is from Ainsworth's reply to a work of Johnson's, entitled "A Christian Plea." In that work Johnson agrees with Robinson and Ainsworth, that baptism is not to be repeated, yet on different grounds. "Difference," he says, "is to be put between God's ordinance and man's corruptions. God's ordinance, God's baptism, is holy, and so to be acknowledged. Who dare, or can, annihilate God's ordinance for man's erroneous persuasions; or the church's corrupt ministration thereof?" Johnson maintained the same views in a previous work.* At the same time he differed from Robinson and Ainsworth in acknowledging the churches of Rome and England as true visible churches, although corrupted and fallen. Ainsworth maintained the contrary with great ability.

In a later work, published in 1623, and entitled "A Censure upon a Dialogue of the Anabaptists, etc.," Ainsworth discussed the entire question respecting baptism. Dr. Stuart in his life of Ainsworth has spoken of it as the best defence of pædo-baptism ever published. While we demur to this judgment, it must be admitted to be one of the most remarkable productions of that truly great man; replete with

* A Brief Treatise concerning Baptism of Infants, &c.

biblical erudition and powerful reasoning. Many other subjects besides that of baptism are included in the treatise; and all of them are discussed in such a manner as to convince the reader, that the teacher of the church at Amsterdam was "a master in Israel."

Mixed up with the baptismal controversy was another, which from its importance demands a separate notice. The general question raised by this controversy respected inter-communion, in its three-fold aspect: first, between private Christians; secondly, between congregations of Christians, or local churches; and thirdly, between the sectional divisions of the church universal. Robinson was the first person to publish any very enlightened opinions on this subject, as he was in all probability the first person in modern times that sought to carry them out in practice.*

It was one of the faults of that, and to a great degree of succeeding ages, that differences of opinion between professing Christians on minor points, whether of doctrine or discipline, were deemed a sufficient reason for rejecting all terms of communion with one another. Each several body of Christians kept aloof from all the rest, disclaiming all connection with them, both in their corporate capacity, and in relation to their individual members. The member of one religious community might from motives of courtesy admit the member of another to be a Christian; but there was little tole-

* It has been affirmed by some that Dr. W. Ames was a means of changing Robinson's views on this subject. This may be more than questioned. Ames was opposed by the latter in his reply to Helwisse; and yet in this work, as will be seen, Robinson's views were fully devoloped. Indeed, Ames was at this time "estranged from, and opposed to, Mr. Robinson; and yet afterwards there was loving compliance and near agreement between them." Young's Chronicles, p. 423; Hanbury, i. 256, 257.

ration of differences, and still less of cordiality in the casual intercourse (communion it could scarcely be termed) that subsisted between them. The chief error of the early Barrowists lay here; justifying the application of the term "rigid" to the principles which in this respect they held: and for a long period the baptists contended for the scripturalness of this disuniting and purely repellant sentiment.* Robert Browne, as we have seen, acted on the principle of the lawfulness of attending upon the ministrations of a church of which he was not a member: but this he considered to be no communion; and those who were called Brownists after him departed from the precedent of their nominal leader.† At an early period in his ministry at Leyden, Robinson was in the habit of hearing various ministers in the neighbourhood; and in the course of a short time he went even farther than this. Looking round upon the divided state of the Christian world, and convinced that in every section of the church there was something estimable, he was anxious to ascertain how far it was possible, amidst all the disunion that existed, to lay a safe and scriptural basis of union and communion between all true believers. He discriminated between things that differed. His large heart was willing to receive all for whom Christ had died; but his enlightened judgment taught him that this could be brought about only under certain restrictions, which must be ascertained by careful examination of New Testament

* Tracts on Liberty of Conscience; passim. The earliest baptists were strict communionists.

† Browne's system was "rigid" enough in some things; for example, in forbidding an *interchange* of ministerial offices, even in churches of the same faith and order.

principles. He therefore devoted much anxious thought to this subject. All the while, he was the centre of antagonistic forces seeking to move him from his truly catholic position. The puritan-conformists on the one side, caught at any expressions which might be construed in favour of the church of England, and endeavoured to argue him into conformity;* the baptists, on the other hand, anathematizing all who did not hold their views on the subject of baptism, and unchurching all churches that had not their baptism for a basis, opened up a full battery against him for shewing any favour to the church of England, whether by acknowledging the validity of her baptism, or by otherwise speaking respectfully of such of her members as were truly pious. Robinson's position was one of considerable difficulty. He had foes on all sides to contend against. But he knew his ground, and maintained it with great ability and temper. He expounded his views with great precision in the treatise "Of Religious Communion," already referred to, meeting his various opponents, the favourers of conformity on the one side, and the baptists on the other. Some of the opinions expressed in this publication may be deemed exceptionable; but those which relate to our present subject are such as are now generally admitted to be just. Distinguishing between private and public communion, he regards the former as obligatory between all Christians, no matter how widely differing from one another on subordinate points. To make good his position, he discriminated between what he terms "personal" and

* For example, William Bradshaw in "The Unreasonableness of the Separation;" Paget in his "Arrow against the Separation of the Brownists," &c.

"church actions." Convinced that a man was a Christian, he would acknowledge him as such, whatever his church relations. Conformist or nonconformist, puritan or baptist, presbyterian, episcopalian, or Roman catholic; no matter in this respect. He felt himself at liberty in his private capacity to hold communion with every one whom he could recognize as a brother in Christ. But in all this, he was no latitudinarian. In reference to "church actions," he felt himself bound to act on another principle. Here he paid due regard to scriptural order and polity. He would not therefore join in acts of church communion with any that did not follow what he conceived to be scripture precedent. "As we are then," he observes, "to join ourselves with them wherein God hath joined us, so are we, wherein he severeth us, to sequester and sever ourselves."

Not, however, that he condemned all false systems alike. He discriminated with great caution between those that were essentially vicious, and those that were unscriptural in the less important matters. He would not place all on a level, as if popery and prelacy, and such church constitutions as admitted of compulsion, were no worse than the rest. In this he evinced a sound judgment and a large heart.

At a later period, in his "Apology," he boldly expresses the same views. "Touching the Reformed Churches," he says, "we account them the true churches of Jesus Christ, and both profess and practise communion with them in the holy things of God; their sermons such of ours frequent as understand the Dutch tongue; the sacraments we do administer unto their known members, if by occasion any of them be present with us; their distractions and

other evils we do seriously bewail, and do desire from the Lord their holy and firm peace. But haply it will be objected, that we are not like-minded with them in all things, nor do approve of sundry practices in use amongst them, if not by public institution, yet by almost universal consent and uniform custom. I grant it; neither doubt I but there are many godly and prudent men in the same churches, who also dislike in effect the things which we do; and, amongst other things, this malapert and unbridled boldness of unskilful men, who make it a very May-game to pass most rash censure upon the faith, and so, by consequence, upon the eternal salvation of their brethren, and to impeach their credit, whom they neither do, nor perhaps willingly would, know; lest that which they wish to condemn unknown, they should be constrained to allow, if they once knew it, and withal to disallow that into which they themselves have been led formerly, by common error of the times."*

Some years afterwards, Robinson composed a treatise, published after his death, entitled, "Of the Lawfulness of Hearing of the Ministers of the Church of England;" in which he carries out the principles just adverted to. In this work he argues, against many objections, that it is lawful to hear the preachers of the church of England, taking his stand upon the following main position:—"Hearing simply, is not appointed of God to be a mark and note either of union in the same faith or order amongst all that hear; or, of difference of Christians from no Christians; or of members from no members of the church; as the sacraments are

* A just and necessary Apology of certain Christians, no less contumeliously than commonly called Brownists or Barrowists; etc. (1625) Introduction.

notes of both in the participants. The hearing of the Word of God is not so enclosed by any hedge or ditch, Divine or human, made about it; but lies in common for all, for the good of all."

Let it be understood, however, that, in maintaining this view, he did not seek to open a door to the church of England, through which inconstant Independents might pass to her communion. His sole object was to provide solid grounds from Scripture, for sometimes hearing from the lips of the clergy an expression of that church's faith and doctrine. While some baptists and others clamorously forbade it as a sin to have anything whatever to do with the church of England and her clergy, Robinson sought to show that, in order to condemn, we must sometimes hear, and that such hearing was not unscriptural. While he refused to commune with that church, he would not deprive himself of the privilege of communion with her pious members; neither would he debar himself the liberty of being a hearer whenever, in his judgment, he deemed it expedient so to do. The following passage contains a summary of his views on this subject:—

"To conclude: for myself, thus I believe with my heart before God, and profess with my tongue before the world; that I have one and the same faith, hope, spirit, baptism, and Lord, which I had in the church of England, and none other: that I esteem so many in that church as are truly partakers of that faith, for my Christian brethren, and myself a fellow member with them, of that mystical Body of Christ scattered far and wide throughout the world: that I have always, in spirit and affection, all Christian fellowship and communion with them; and am most ready, in all outward actions and exercises of religion, lawful and

lawfully done, to express the same. And withal, that I am persuaded the hearing of the Word of God there preached, in the manner and upon the grounds formerly mentioned, is both lawful, and, upon just occasion, necessary for me and all true Christians withdrawing from that hierarchical order of church government and ministry, and the appurtenances thereof; and uniting in the order and ordinances instituted of Christ, the only King and Lord of His church, and by all his disciples to be observed. And, lastly, that I cannot communicate with, or submit unto, the said church order and ordinances there established, either in state or act, without being condemned of my own heart; and, therein provoking God, who is greater than my heart, to condemn me much more. And, for my failings—which may easily be too many one way or other — of ignorance herein, and so for all my other sins, I most humbly crave pardon, first and most at the hands of God, and so of all men whom therein I offend, or have offended, any manner of way; even as they desire and look that God should pardon their offences."

Another controversy, of less importance, but which pended for a long time and divided chief friends, related to the question of "eldership." This was the term by which the controversy was known; but much more than the question of eldership was involved in it, namely, whether the church, or the officers of the church, should have the virtual power in ecclesiastical matters. In fact, the very principle of Congregational Independency itself was involved in the question.

Before this period, and probably ever since the revival of Independency in England, this point had, at

various intervals, been mooted. The Scriptures of the New Testament, as we have observed in a former volume, left the adjustment between private and official relations, within the local church, to be determined, in a great measure, by the spirit of those who composed it. It was not in accordance with the plan of infinite wisdom so clearly to draw the line of distinction, as to allow of no scope for the exercise of mutual concession and good understanding. If everything had been specified with levitical minuteness, many disputes would have been avoided; but at the same time, a most important test, in relation to a church's prosperity, would have been wanting. There might have been much regularity in a church's operations, but that regularity would become mechanical, and compatible with almost any amount of spiritual declension. Infinite wisdom is displayed as much in what the New Testament has left undetermined, as in what it has clearly and explicitly defined.

Soon after, if not before, the settlement of the exiles in Holland, differences of opinion arose in the church of which Johnson was pastor, respecting the amount of authority scripturally due to church officers. At first, this difference was of a harmless kind; the harmony of the church rendering it a merely speculative matter. At a later period, however, a "root of bitterness" sprang up amongst them, having some relation to the alleged misconduct of Mr. Studley, one of the deacons. Whether the charges against him were true or false, can scarcely be ascertained. So far as the evidence reaches, we incline to the latter opinion; more especially as he met his accusers in a fair and open manner. What most concerns us is, the relation between his case and the question of the eldership. It appears,

then, that a party of about fifteen, opposed to Mr. Studley, were determined to depose him from his office. This, however, was not so easy a matter; Johnson, Ainsworth, Clyfton, and probably a majority of the church besides, regarding him as a calumniated man. This personal dispute, in its progress, raised the general question respecting the right of the church to dismiss its officers; and this, the yet more general question respecting the inter-limitations of official and church power. When the question came fully out, Robinson was at Leyden. He and Ainsworth took one side in the controversy; Johnson and Clyfton the other. Various publications, bearing upon the disputed points, were issued during the successive stages of the controversy. On the whole, Ainsworth and Robinson had the best of the argument.* There can be little doubt that Johnson was very sincere in the part which he took; and both he and Clyfton maintained their position with considerable ability. Clyfton, however, was too much influenced by motives of friendship in relation to Studley; and Johnson was not only inconsistent in admitting that a church might dismiss "some of its officers, yet not all," but he also fell into the error throughout of supposing that the church polity of the New Testament was to be interpreted by a reference to the synagogue polity of the Old. The question, at last, came out in this shape:—Has the church at large, by the voice of its associated members, a right to determine upon all matters affecting its interests; as, for example, in admitting or excluding members, electing and dismissing officers, and determining cases of discipline; or, have the officers, in their capacity as an eldership or presbytery, the right to do all these

* Jacob agreed with Ainsworth and Robinson, Hanbury, i. 235.

things, save and except in the matter of their election? It is evident that the very foundations of Congregational Independency, internally considered, were involved in this question, and that Johnson's views, fully carried out, would leave the independency of the church a merely nominal thing.

In consequence of Ainsworth's enlightened opposition to Johnson's views, a party formed around him, and no alternative remained but that of a separation. This was effected on the 15th and 16th of September, 1610. Of course, the circumstance occasioned much scandal, especially amongst those who were ready to make the most of the divisions that arose amongst the separatists.

It was with great reluctance, however, that such a step was taken, especially on Ainsworth's part, as appears by his anxiety to have the matter of difference adjusted. Johnson also would have been glad of some arrangement, if his party had not been violent in their remonstrances. Indeed, an attempt of this nature was made through the medium of Robinson and his church. The Ainsworthians applied to the Leyden people to interfere by friendly mediation, and the Johnsonians followed with a request that they would suspend their judgment, for certain specified reasons. Although Robinson agreed in the main with Ainsworth, he recommended that for the sake of peace a middle way should be adopted; namely, that the matter of offence should "first be brought, for order, preparation, and prevention of unnecessary trouble, unto the elders as the church-governors; and afterwards, if things were not there ended, to the church of elders and brethren, there to be judged,—the admonition being carried according to the alteration

practised and agreed upon by all parties, till it should please the God of wisdom and Father of lights, by further consideration and discussion, to manifest otherwise for their joint accord."* This recommendation was very imperfectly carried out on both sides, and the discussion instead of leading to unanimity, terminated in the separation already referred to. The testimony of Robinson and Brewster, signed with their names, appears to implicate some members of the Johnsonian party, as having acted an insincere part, and concludes with the following sentence:—"How much better had it been had they admitted of a peaceable parting, all things considered, than through extreme straitness in themselves, thus to have made their brethren their adversaries; and themselves, yea, and us all, a bye-word to the whole world." According to Ainsworth, who appears to have been "loth to come to any professed and public opposition" to Johnson, it was impossible to prevent the division which took place. The strife was too violent; the war became an open one; and for the sake of peace it was necessary to separate. From this time the discussions on the subject of the eldership were made public, and were continued for a long period.

Johnson appears to have been the last to adhere to the consistorial view. His last work on the subject was a treatise "Touching the Reformed Churches, with whom myself agree in the Faith of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." †

* Hanbury. i. 243.

† This was one of the "Three Treatises" included in "A Christian Plea," to which Ainsworth replied. In the first of these treatises, Johnson presents a petition to King James for a Toleration in England.

A few additional facts may here be inserted respecting Johnson, more especially as from this time he seems to depart from the ranks of Independency. The following passage, from "Governor Bradford's Dialogue," shews in how remarkable a manner he had been converted to the principles of the Barrowists.

"Mr. Johnson was a preacher to the company of English of the Staple at Middleburg, in Zealand, and had great and certain maintenance allowed him by them, and was highly respected of them, and so zealous against this way as that (when) Mr. Barrow's and Mr. Greenwood's Refutation of Gifford was privately in printing in this city, he not only was a means to discover it, but was made the ambassador's instrument to intercept them at the press, and see them burnt; the which charge he did so well perform, as he let them go on until they were wholly finished, and then surprised the whole impression, not suffering any to escape; and then, by the magistrate's authority, caused them all to be openly burnt, himself standing by until they were all consumed to ashes. Only he took up two of them, one to keep in his own study, that he might see their errors, and the other to bestow on a special friend for the like use. But mark the sequel. When he had done this work, he went home, and being set down in his study, he began to turn over some pages of this book, and superficially to read some things here and there as his fancy led him. At length he met with something that began to work upon his spirit, which so wrought with him as drew him to this resolution, seriously to read over the whole book; the which he did once and again. In the end he was so taken, and his conscience was troubled so, as he could have no rest in himself until

he crossed the seas and came to London to confer with the authors, who were then in prison, and shortly after executed. After which conference he was so satisfied and confirmed in the truth, as he never returned to his place any more at Middleburg, but adjoined himself to their society at London, and was afterwards committed to prison, and then banished; and, in conclusion, coming to live at Amsterdam, he caused the same books, which he had been an instrument to burn, to be new printed and set out at his own charge. And some of us here present testify this to be a true relation, which we heard from his own mouth before many witnesses." *

Again, farther on in the same Dialogue, it is added:—"A very grave man he was, and an able teacher, and was the most solemn in all his administrations that we have seen any, and especially in dispensing the seals of the covenant, both baptism and the Lord's supper. And a good disputant he was. We heard Mr. Smith upon occasion say, that he was persuaded no men living were able to maintain a cause against those two men, meaning Mr. Johnson and Mr. Ainsworth, if they had not the truth on their side. He, by reason of many dissensions that fell out in the church, and the subtilty of one of the elders of the same, came after many years to alter his judgment about the government of the church, and his practice thereupon, which caused a division amongst them. But he lived not many years after, and died at Amsterdam, after his return from Embden."†

It may here be observed, that the Independents generally at this time entertained what would now be

* Young's Chronicles, p. 424.

† Ibid. p. 445.

considered, by their successors, erroneous views respecting the composition of the eldership. Browne, Barrowe, Johnson, Ainsworth, and even Robinson, regarded the offices of pastor, teacher, and elder, as distinct offices. It is not difficult to perceive how this opinion originated, neither is it a matter of very great importance except as affecting the internal independency of the church. Smyth appears to have been the first to have had a clear conception of the erroneousness of the views entertained in common, both by puritans and independents, on this point. "The triformed presbytery," he says, "consisting of three kinds of elders, namely, pastors, teachers, rulers, is none of God's ordinance, but man's device; and the lay-elders, so called, are anti-christian."* In another passage, however, Smyth seems to resolve all offices into one. Commenting on Romans xii. 6—8, where the apostle was thought by some to speak of pastors, teachers, rulers, deacons, and widows, as distinct officers, Smyth observes, "That is denied to be the true resolution of the place; for although there be five several actions repeated, yet doth it not follow that there are five several officers to perform those actions; for one person may perform them all, and yet be no officer, namely, teach, exhort, rule, distribute, show mercy. 1 Cor. xiv. 3, 26, 31; Rom. xii. 13; 1 Cor. v. 5." † To this Ainsworth replies, with his accustomed ability, "Behemoth is so big that 'he trusteth he can draw up Jordan into his mouth,' etc." His explication, however, is not satisfactory. Smyth's

* A Defence of the Holy Scriptures, Worship, and Ministry used in the Christian Churches separated from Antichrist, &c., by H. Ainsworth (1609).

† Ibid.

main points remained untouched. In successive periods they elicited further discussion, and were at last received by the Independents generally as correct. Jacob was the first to limit the officers of the church to two classes, bishops and deacons; but the "triformed presbytery" retained its hold on the Independent churches generally, until the close of the seventeenth century. *

Other controversies besides these arose amongst the exiles in these unsettled times; but as they were of minor and temporary importance we pass them over. Those we have mentioned deserve a place in the records of Independency, inasmuch as they had great influence in modifying the views of the Independents of later times, and are still worthy of the serious study of all parties, who would understand the principles of a scriptural church polity.

* See Harmer's Miscellaneous Works, pp. 193—197. This matter is not of much importance in relation to a church's independency, however important in other respects. In relation to a church's independency, the question is—Have the officers power to act without or against the church's consent; not How many kinds of officers are there. Some have thoughtlessly said that Robinson and the Independents of this period were *presbyterians*, because of their practice in relation to this subject. Such parties forget the adage, *verba valent nummi*—words are like coin, and bear value according to the stamp. Presbyterianism gives *power* to presbyteries over churches.

CHAPTER II.

INDEPENDENCY IN ENGLAND, FROM THE DEATH OF WHITGIFT TO THE FORMATION OF HENRY JACOB'S CHURCH IN LONDON. 1603—1616.

While the controversies of which we have given a brief account in the last chapter were pending in Holland, important events occurred in England, to which we now direct the reader's attention.

Archbishop Whitgift died in February, 1603, and was succeeded in the following year by a man of kindred spirit, whose brief administration of ecclesiastical affairs was quite as inimical to liberty as that of his predecessor. Bancroft received his appointment, it is said, on account of his deep-rooted enmity to the puritans and nonconformists, and his Elizabethan spirit in all matters pertaining to the church. One of his first acts was to procure a decision of the twelve judges that it was lawful to enforce subscription, and to punish the puritans and others who petitioned against that, or any other supposed grievance;* and no sooner was he thus armed with legal power, than the work of persecution went on under his direction with increased severity. "Our puritans go down on all sides"—"The poor puritans are ferreted out of all corners"—was the language of the courtiers of the

* Vaughan, i. 139.

day, who looked on and sometimes wondered what these oppressions might lead to.

In 1605, about three hundred of the clergy were "deprived;" * while during the same time, according to one whose testimony may be relied on in this matter, "more churches were beautified and repaired than had been in many years before." † But for the growing opposition of parliament, it is not easy to say where the clearing process would have terminated. The parties who were thus expelled from the church of England, were some of her most able and devoted ministers. In doctrine, they were nearly all evangelical or Calvinistic; while in respect to polity and worship they were somewhat divided. All of them objected to popish ceremonies; but some went farther than others in the principles on which they refused to comply with the terms of subscription.

They were divided in the last respect into two classes, namely, rigid puritans, and moderate puritans. The "moderate puritans" constituted at this time the larger class; although, as years rolled by and persecution continued, many of these became more decided in their views and joined the others. Generally speaking, the moderate puritans limited their objections to the surplice, the cross in baptism, and other matters of custom and rite. "It is contrary," said they, "to God's word to use such ceremonies in the worship of God as man hath devised, if they be notoriously known to have been abused unto idolatry or superstition." The writings of this party were freely canvassed by the

* Offer of a Conference, etc. Dedication. Hanbury, i. 126—128.

† Heylin's Hist. of Presbyterianism, p. 376.

conforming clergy and the ecclesiastical rulers of the day, no doubt because they seldom went to the root of the matter in their objections to the established order of things. Bishop Morton,* Dr. Burgess, and some other high church advocates, undertook to enter into the lists of controversy with them, and not always without some appearance of success.

The "rigid puritans" were men of another stamp. They took their stand on well-defined principles; and though too willing to remain in the establishment, could they have done so without dishonour, were sufficiently enlightened and conscientious to make great advances in succeeding years. They acknowledged the churches of the establishment as true visible churches; but regarded the Scriptures as the only rule in all matters pertaining to religion, and declared it to be "a sin to force any Christian to do any act of religion that could not be warranted by the same." They also held that a church is an assembly of true believers, which should be free from all external ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and empowered to choose its own officers.† They were, in fact, Congregational Independents; and the very name of Independent originated with one of their own number. There was scarcely a single point on which they differed from the exiles in Holland. This circumstance is one of great interest, and proves to how great an extent the

* This bishop had the honour of "confirming" Richard Baxter, when a boy, and of inspiring him with an early repugnance to that episcopal ceremony, by the slovenly manner in which he performed it. Third Defence of Nonconformity, p. 40.

† Price's History of Nonconformity, vol. i. pp. 505, 506; Bradshaw's English Puritanisme. This work was put into Latin by Ames, in 1610, and afterwards appeared with his name, in 1641.

principles of the Brownists, Barrowists, and their successors, had already leavened the public mind.

Due consideration has not been given to the fact now adverted to. The name of puritan has acted too much as a veil in respect to the real character of these men; and hence modern writers have often regarded them in a wrong light, and have been led to erroneous conclusions respecting some matters of importance relating to the history of these times.* The term Independent was not used as the name of a party until some years after this; but the principles of Congregational Independency were advocated from the time of Browne downwards, and by the parties termed "rigid puritans," no less than by the separatists of Holland.

Henry Jacob was at the head of this body of English Independents. According to some he was considered as the father of Independency, rather than Robinson.† And, according to Wood, his son Henry spoke of him as "the first Independent in England." Some parts of his history are involved in obscurity. He appears to have been the minister of a congregation at Leyden for some time; to have left Leyden and entered the church of England at the end of Elizabeth's reign, and to have returned afterwards to Holland, but when it is not certain. Governor Bradford, speaking of himself and of the members of Robinson's church, says, "We some of us knew Mr. Parker, Dr. Ames, and Mr. Jacob, in Holland, when

* For example, see Broadmead Records, Historical Introduction, p. lxxviii. &c. Mr. Underhill has not discriminated between Congregational Independency and separatism.

† Cotton's Way, p. 15; Stillingfleet's Unreasonableness of Separation, p. 53. It is also said, "Robinson succeeded (though not immediately) Jacob, in his congregation at Leyden."

they sojourned for a time in Leyden; and all three boarded together, and had their victuals dressed by some of our acquaintance." He also adds, "and after Mr. Jacob returned," but does not say when.* The main difference between the rigid puritans as represented by Jacob, and the exiles, related not to the principle of Congregational Independency, but of separation from the church of England. The exiles would not acknowledge the church of England to be a true visible church; † but the rigid puritans made a distinction between the church of England and "the churches of England," and, considering many of the latter to be true visible churches, or that they might be such, were unwilling to separate from the system unless compelled to do so. By bearing this fact in mind, we shall see how it was, that at a later period the Independents, following in the steps of these predecessors, came to occupy so many of the parochial churches of the country.

As early as 1604, Jacob avowed the principles of Independency, in a work already referred to.‡ In 1606, he and his party drew up and published, "A Christian and Modest Offer of a most Indifferent Conference, or Disputation, about the main and principal Controversies betwixt the Prelates and the late silenced and deprived Ministers in England; tendered by some of the said Ministers to the Archbishops and Bishops, and all their adherents." In this, the same principles are advocated. In 1609, the

* Young's Chronicles, p. 439.

† Johnson excepted. See Ainsworth's Counterpoison, in reply to Sprint, Bernard, and Crashaw, for puritan views on the one side, and separatist on the other. Hanbury, i. 170—178.

‡ See vol. ii. p. 239, of the present work.

same party addressed to King James, "An Humble Supplication for Toleration, and Liberty to enjoy and observe the Ordinances of Jesus Christ in the administration of His Churches in lieu of Human Constitutions." The language of this petition is such as Independents of the present day would be willing to use. For example:—"Our Lord Jesus Christ hath given to each particular church, or ordinary congregation, this right and privilege; namely, to elect, ordain, and deprive her own ministers; and to exercise all the other parts of lawful ecclesiastical jurisdiction under Him." And in respect to synodical association they reject it when it becomes a "Ruling" power, although they "in no sort" dislike the "Deliberative and Persuasive Synod;" that is, such a general assembly of the Churches as is to be seen in the Congregational Union of England and Wales of the present day. We shall have occasion to refer to the petition again. We now adduce it to show that the rigid puritans were really Independents. In 1610, Jacob published another work expressly on the subject of the church's constitution and government, entitled, "The Divine Beginning and Institution of Christ's True, Visible, or Ministerial Church; also, the Unchangeableness of the same by Men; namely, in the Term and Essential Constitution thereof." * In this work Jacob again shows himself an Independent. He defines a true, visible, and ministerial church as follows:—"A number of faithful people joined by their willing consent in a spiritual outward society, or body politic, ordinarily coming together into one place; instituted by Christ in his New Testament,

* Jacob was at Leyden at this time, probably, since this work was printed there; and the next at Middleburgh.

and having the power to exercise ecclesiastical government, and all God's other spiritual ordinances, in and for itself, immediately from Christ." In consequence of some misinterpretation of his meaning in certain parts of this treatise, on the part of "divers godly" persons, he published, in 1612, a further statement of his views, in "A Declaration, and Plainer Opening of Certain Points; with a Sound Confirmation of some other, contained in a Treatise intituled, 'The Divine Beginning, etc.'" In this work there are two things specially worthy of notice. First, the explanation which Jacob gives of the difference between himself and the rigid puritans, on the one hand, and the exiles on the other, in respect to separation from the church of England. "As to the point of separation," he says, "For my part I never was, nor am, separated from all public communion with the congregations of England. I acknowledge, therefore, that in England are true visible churches, and ministers (though accidentally, yet) such as I refuse not to communicate with."* From his use of the phrase, "congregations of England," and his reference to the ministers as being "accidentally" true ministers, it is evident that he took the view we have already mentioned. In a later work, he explains himself yet further on this point, but to the same effect, "In respect as those congregations are parts of proper diocesan and provincial churches, so they are true churches of Christ *accidentally*. For proper diocesan and provincial churches being not in the New Testament, have in them, by *accident*, the true essential form of Christ's visible churches."† This may seem very much like

* Page 1.

† An Attestation, &c., p. 305.

special pleading; yet it must be borne in mind, inasmuch as these views spread amongst the Independents of a later period, and had an important influence on their conduct during the period of the Commonwealth.

The other thing worthy of notice relates to the origin of the name Independent. This term, in its modern ecclesiastical sense, was first employed by Jacob in this work. The following is the passage in which it occurs:—"Where each ordinary congregation giveth their free consent in their own government, there certainly each congregation is an entire and *Independent* body-politic, and indued with power immediately under, and from Christ, as every proper church is, and ought to be."* It is somewhat singular that modern writers should question whether Jacob was an Independent or no,† when he was not only one of the best expounders of the principle of Congregational Independency, but also the first to give it that name which has served to distinguish its advocates in every succeeding period. This work, although published in 1612, was written before September 1611. Robinson's "Apology," generally supposed to have been the first work in which the term was used to designate the system, was not published until 1619. With strict truth, therefore, Jacob may be called one of the first of the modern Independents. It is evident, also, from what has been advanced, that he was not alone. The rigid puritans advocated the same principles, and espoused the same cause.

The publications we have noticed above were, in all

* Page 13.

† See Broadmead Records, Historical Introduction, pp. lxxviii.—lxxx.

probability, composed in Holland, where Jacob learned to expand his views amongst the other exiles, and especially from Robinson. While there, he published, in 1613, another work of great ability, entitled "An Attestation of many Learned, Godly, and Famous Divines, Lights of Religion, and Pillars of the Gospel; justifying this Doctrine, viz., that the Church-Government ought to be always with the People's Free Consent. Also this, that a True Church under the Gospel, containeth no more ordinary congregations but one, etc." The title-page is sufficient to indicate the principles of the writer. Here, again, he uses the word independent, and advocates the principle expressed by it against many objections, and adduces a great variety of testimonies in its favour, from the writings of almost all parties. Our limits forbid our making any further reference to it in this place. This was, probably, Jacob's last work in Holland. In the course of a few years, we find him in England, acting out the principles he had so long advocated. Before we advance to this point, however, it is necessary to glance at the course of affairs at home, preparing the way for his return.

While James not only sided with, but in many things headed, the hierarchical party against the puritans of all classes, an unfavourable impression was growing up in the public mind, more especially amongst men of independent fortune, and the better sort of the middle classes, in respect both to the clergy and the monarch. Symptoms of disaffection were occasionally exhibited in parliament, which at length led to an open rupture. In 1609, the House of Commons sent a message to the Lords, announcing that they had taken notice "of a book lately pub-

lished by one Dr. Covel," containing matters which they deemed scandalous, and dangerous to the public welfare; and but for the king's interference in behalf of Covel, who was one of his chaplains, a check would have been given at that time to the hierarchical and despotical spirit of the rulers in church and state. In the next year's session of parliament many of the popular leaders gave expression to their strong feelings of resentment at the encroachments made, and attempted to be made, on the liberty of the subject; and the monarch, taking alarm, summoned both houses to Whitehall, and gave them an assurance that he would keep within the bounds of the constitution. This act of condescension, however, was performed with a very bad grace. In the course of his address, he compared the power of kings with that of God, and argued, that as it is blasphemy to speak against "what God may do," so is it sedition to "dispute what a king may do, in the height of his power." The Commons were not the men to be schooled after this fashion. The tide of popular knowledge and discussion had set in, and was not to be driven back; and assumptions of kingly prerogative, instead of retarding it, only rendered it more fretful and impatient to advance to its proper bounds. The puritans found many friends in parliament, and had but to persevere in order to triumph.

Amongst other things tending to the advancement of the popular cause at this time, was an ill-advised measure of Bancroft's, a little before his death. Two persons—one a minister, and the other a merchant—had been committed to prison, under a sentence of the high commission. They claimed a writ of habeas corpus, and procured the services of a barrister, Mr.

Nicholas Fuller, to plead their cause. Fuller argued on their behalf with great fearlessness, and maintained that the commission had no legal power either to fine or imprison. Anticipating the consequences of such a mode of warfare against authority, the archbishop represented the matter in false colours to the king, and procured the incarceration of the champion of right. Fuller remained in prison to the end of his days; but this one act, so illegal and unconstitutional, did more than any thing else to alienate the members of the legal profession from the rulers of the church, and was the means of raising up amongst them, in after periods, a succession of public-spirited men, who proved the advocates of law and justice, and the successful defenders of the persecuted and oppressed.

Archbishop Bancroft died in 1610, and was succeeded by one in many respects his very opposite. Archbishop Abbot was a Calvinist in doctrine, and favourable to the puritan party so long as they maintained what he conceived to be a respectful demeanour towards the hierarchy of the day. When severe, his severity arose rather from his position, and the instigation of the zealots of the church by whom he was surrounded, than from his own disposition. He has generally been considered one of the mildest occupants of the see of Canterbury; and yet he was not free from great blame in respect to some of his public acts. The circumstance that two individuals, Bartholomew Legate and Edward Wightman, were burned at the stake for imputed heresy during his ecclesiastical administration, is sufficient in itself to stamp it with infamy.*

* King James is said to have been most in fault in this matter. The cruel pedant, imagining that persuasion was a prerogative of

In 1611, the "authorised version" of the Holy Scriptures now in use was first published. This great work was commenced in 1604, and its completion was the occasion for satisfaction amongst all parties. On the whole it is an admirable translation, and has given a character to the English language as spoken in succeeding times. One circumstance, however, in relation to this deservedly popular version is worthy of notice as bearing upon our subject. It appears that the earlier translation of Tindal, in 1526, had exerted some influence on the public mind against the hierarchical orders and dogmas of the church, in consequence of putting the word "senior" for priest, "congregation" for church, "repentance" for penance, and so forth. When King James, therefore, in compliance with the request of the puritans at the Hampton Court conference, gave orders that a new translation should be commenced by the most learned men of the age, he prescribed as a rule that the old ecclesiastical terms should be employed, as in the Bishops' Bible, instead of the vernacular, which Tindal had used. The motive of the monarch was palpable enough, and some of the translators would have departed from the prescribed rule, as in all fidelity they were bound to do. As, however, the work of translation went on, discussions bearing upon the differences between Congregational Independency, puritanism, and prelacy were going on also. It was felt by Archbishop Bancroft, in whose administration the

royalty, endeavoured to convince Legate of his errors. On failing to do so, he "spurned at him with his foot, saying, Away, base fellow," and handed him over to the executioner. Legate was burned at Smithfield, in March, 1612; Wightman, at Burton-on-Trent, in the following April.

work was drawing to a close, that if Tindal's terms were employed, as Dr. Miles Smith and some others thought they ought to have been, the common reader would be confirmed in the principles which had been so ably advocated by Jacob, and were then rapidly spreading. He was therefore peremptory, at least with respect to the word "church" instead of congregation; the translators and revisers were compelled to yield; and so the word has remained to the present day.*

After this period, there was, with the exception referred to above, a comparative lull in the proceedings of the hierarchical party. For some years the spirit of Abbot prevailed, and the puritans and nonconformists were to a great degree unmolested. While Bancroft, according to Clarendon, had almost subdued the "unruly spirit of the nonconformists," and "if he had lived, would quickly have extinguished all that fire in England which had been kindled at Geneva," Abbot brought none of the same "antidote" into operation. The same authority adds: "For the strict observance of the discipline of the church, or the conformity to the articles or canons established, he made little inquiry, and took less care. If men prudently forbore a public reviling and railing at the hierarchy and ecclesiastical government, let their opinions and private practice be what it would, they were not only secure from any inquisition

* Dr. Miles Smith wrote the Preface to the authorised version, and was created Bishop of Gloucester, for his pains. According to him, Bancroft altered the various passages where Tindal's version had been followed. The Bishop of Gloucester excused himself for submitting to this tampering with the sacred text, by saying—"but he is so potent, there is no contradicting him."

of his, but acceptable to him, and at least equally preferred by him."*

During this season of calm, many of the exiles returned to England; amongst others, Helwisse, at an earlier, and Jacob at a later period. In what year Jacob returned has not been ascertained. It appears certain, however, that in 1616, he formed a church in London, which has been described as "a separate congregation," and "the first Independent or congregational church in England."† The latter part of this statement is not correct; since we have already seen that there were many churches in England based on the same principles in Elizabeth's reign, while Helwisse's church was, no doubt, of the same order in this respect. If it be said that Jacob's church was the first that was known by the name of Independent, we reply that there is no proof of the fact. This term was in all probability unknown as the name of a peculiar party until some years later. There is something interesting however in the statement respecting the simple and scriptural method in which this church was formed. Having consorted with certain parties, some of whose names have reached us—amongst others those of "Staismore, Browne, Prior, Almey, Throughton, Allen, Gibbet, Farre, and Goodal,"—they observed "a day of solemn fasting and prayer, for a blessing upon their undertaking." At the close of this "solemnity," each of them made "open confession of their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; and then, standing together, they joined hands, and solemnly

* History of the Rebellion, i. 157.

† Edwards asserts that the church at Duckenfield, in Cheshire, was formed before any of the exiles came over from Holland. Orme's Memoirs of Dr. Owen, p. 51.

covenanted with each other, in the presence of Almighty God, to walk together in all God's ways and ordinances, according as He had already revealed, or should further make known to them. Mr. Jacob was then chosen pastor, by the suffrage of the brotherhood." Afterwards, "others were appointed to the office of deacons, with fasting and prayer, and imposition of hands." * From what has already been stated respecting the principles of Jacob, there can be no doubt that this was an Independent church, as is also evident from the "Confession of Faith," published by the associated parties in the same year. In one particular it is observable that this church came more nearly to the practice of the Independent churches of the present day, than those of the separatists in Holland. Jacob had by this time rejected the "triformed presbytery," and the church formed by him might have been saluted, as the church of Philippi, with its "bishops and deacons."

Such was the course of events in the period marked out by this chapter. We have reserved, however, for this place, a few remarks in relation to the views entertained up to this time respecting liberty of conscience.†

As we have already shown, Robert Browne went very far in asserting the broad distinction between things civil and religious. He not only distinguished between the kingdom of Christ and the kingdoms of this world, but defined the proper limits of the civil

* Neal's Hist. of the Puritans, i. 476.

† The reader will bear in mind, that in the following pages we refer to liberty of conscience, properly so called; on the broad ground of the essential distinction between things civil and religious, and the inalienable right of every man to follow his own religious convictions.

magistrate as having respect to "outward justice" only. He differed from many of his followers, so called, in his views on these matters. He rebuked the puritans of his day for looking to the civil power to deliver them from "the yoke of antichrist, by bow, and by sword, and by battle," instead of using the weapons of truth and of the spirit. And in reference to the advancement of Christ's kingdom, he differed from Barrowe and Greenwood, who thought that the magistrate might compel to the hearing of the word. "It is the conscience," said he, "and not the power of man, that will drive us to seek the Lord's kingdom."

Notwithstanding this, some expressions of his have been thought to wear a dubious aspect.* The following have been referred to as examples:—"Neither durst Moses, nor any of the good kings of Judah, force the people, by law or by power, to receive the church government; but after they received it, if then they fell away, and sought not the Lord, they might put them to death." Again:—"If the magistrate be of their flocks, why should they tarry for them? Unless they will have the sheep force the shepherd unto his duty. Indeed, the magistrate may force him, but it is shame to tarry till he be forced." The inference that has been drawn from these passages is, that "while he claimed for the church a perfect independence of the civil power, he yet allowed the magistrate a coercive authority in cases of acknowledged duty." We think the inference scarcely conclusive. The first passage is the narration of an historical fact, and does not, in itself, implicate Browne in the principle of civil procedure adverted to. The

* Broadmead Records, Hist. Introduction, p. xxxvii.

second depends for its force altogether upon the kind of emphasis put upon the word "may." Browne may have said, "the magistrate *may* force him," in an ironical, or even satirical humour, without asserting that the magistrate might do so lawfully. On the whole, we are inclined to think that these isolated passages are not sufficient to warrant the exception that has been made against the comprehensive views entertained by Browne.* We are confirmed in this opinion by Giffard's animadversions on Browne's writings. "He maketh many arguments," says Giffard, "to prove that princes are not to be stayed for, *nor yet to have to do, by public power, to establish religion.* Which opinion of his, is such abridging the sacred power of princes, and such horrible injury to the church, contrary to the manifest word of God, that if there were nothing else, it is enough to make him an odious and detestable heretic, until he show repentance."†

With all deference, then, to the judgment of others, we are compelled to regard Robert Browne as the first in this country to advocate liberty of conscience on the broad ground of the distinction between matters civil and religious.‡ There can be little doubt,

* Orme, in his Memoirs of Dr. Owen, p. 74, says, "To the Brownists are to be ascribed the first correct views of religious liberty." Mr. Brook, author of the Lives of the Puritans, says, "Notwithstanding all that has been said, it does appear that the first dissemination of these enlightened principles belongs, not to the baptists, but, in truth, to Robert Browne." MS. letter, October 27, 1847.

† Giffard's Answer to the Brownists, p. 104; Stillingfleet, p. 78.

‡ As we have already affirmed, in the first chapter of the last volume, there were advocates of liberty of conscience, under one form or another, in every age; but not in connexion with Congregational Independency. See Appendix A.

also, that the early Brownists held the same views as their leader, since they are so referred to in the contemporaneous writings of the day. The Barrowists were in this, and in some other respects, another class of men; as the separatists in Holland were a third, and the rigid puritans in England a fourth. All of them, together with the baptists, were Congregational Independents; but they did not all hold the same views in respect to the scriptural power of the magistrate in matters of religion.

The Barrowists, following the two leaders whose names have been mentioned, were very far wrong on this point. "The magistrate," said Greenwood, "ought to compel the infidels to hear the doctrine of the church, and also, with the approbation of the church, to send forth meet men, with gifts and graces, to instruct the infidels."* "The prince," says Barrowe, "is charged, and in duty ought to see the ministers of the church do their duty, and teach the law of God diligently and sincerely." At the same time, both Greenwood and Barrowe would have the magistrate keep to God's laws and ordinances, and refrain from making any of their own. "A godly prince," says Barrowe, "is bound to God's law; made the keeper thereof, not the controller; the servant, not the Lord."†

Johnson, and the separatists in exile, were an offshoot from the Barrowists, and held the same erroneous views. "We condemn not," said Johnson, "reformation commanded and compelled by the magis-

* Conferences, p. 59; Broadmead Records, Historical Introduction, p. xlii. This work has done good service on this question; although in error on some points, as we have shown, and have yet to show..

† Brief Discovery, pp. 218, 219.

trate, but do unfeignedly desire that God would put it into the heart of her majesty, and all other princes within their dominions, to command and compel a reformation, according to the word of the Lord." At the same time, he limits the power of the magistrate, as Barrowe had done, to the execution of God's laws only, and would have it confined to what is external. "Princes," he says, "may and ought, within their dominions, to abolish all false worship, and all false ministries whatsoever; and to establish the true worship and ministry appointed by God in his word; commanding and compelling their subjects to come unto, and practice no other but this. Yet must they leave it unto God to persuade the conscience, and to add to his church, from time to time, such as shall be saved."* Robinson entertained the same defective principles. "That godly magistrates," he said, "are by compulsion to repress public and notable idolatry, as also to provide that the truth of God, in his ordinance, be taught and published in their dominions, I make no doubt; it may be also, it is not unlawful for them, by some penalty or other, to provoke their subjects universally unto hearing for their instruction and conversion; yea, to grant they may inflict the same upon them, if, after due teaching, they offer not themselves unto the church."†

Jacob and the rigid puritans were of the same mind. "Though we affirm," he said, "that the church government is independent, and immediately derived from Christ, yet we affirm also, that the civil magistrate is ever therein supreme governor civilly. And though nothing may be imposed on the Chris-

* Answer to Jacob, pp. 198, 199.

† Justification of Separation, pp. 242, 243.

tian people of a congregation, against their wills, by any spiritual authority, for so only we intend, yet we affirm withal, that the civil magistrate may impose on them spiritual matters, by civil power; yea, whether they like or dislike, if he see it good." And then, referring to the rigid puritans as associated with him, he adds, "This we all gladly acknowledge. Wherein we refer ourselves to that which we have publicly written and protested in this behalf, in An Humble Supplication, or Petition for Toleration, 1609; and Offer of Conference, 1606." *

After this admission on the part of Jacob himself, it would be more than futile to attempt to prove that the petition for toleration, referred to in this passage, was a petition for liberty of conscience on the broadest grounds, or for "mutual toleration among all Christians." Neither is the plea which it sets up, "the ground on which all that has ever followed is rested." † The petition is for liberty to be granted to Jacob and his party to follow their own convictions of what was scripturally right, and nothing more. The civil authority over religion and religious worship is admitted; and the papists are expressly excluded from the toleration sought, not merely on political, but also on religious grounds. It is evident that while Jacob understood Congregational Independency, he did not understand what we have designated Aggregate Independency. He permitted Cæsar to interfere not only with "the things of Cæsar," but also with "the things of God." Nor do we find that he ever obtained more correct views on this subject in his later years. The Confession of Faith of 1616, is

* An Attestation, &c., p. 115.

† Hanbury, i. 225—note *f*.

very explicit in asserting Congregational Independency; but retains the incorrect principle relative to civil authority. In its twenty-seventh article, the views of the Independents of Jacob's order are thus expressed:—"We believe that we, and all true visible churches, ought to be overseen and kept in good order and peace; and ought to be governed, under Christ, both supremely and also subordinately, by the civil magistrate; yea, in causes of religion, when need is. By which rightful power of his, he ought to cherish and prefer the godly and religious, and to punish, as truth and right shall require, the untractable and unreasonable; howbeit, yet always but civilly. And, therefore, we from our hearts most humbly do desire that our gracious sovereign king would himself, so far as he seeth good, and further by some substituted civil magistrate under him, in clemency take this special oversight and government of us, to whose ordering and protection we most humbly commit ourselves, acknowledging that because we want the use of this Divine ordinance, that, therefore, most great and infinite evils both to us and even to the whole kingdom do ensue; and also because of the spiritual lords, their government over us. And, notwithstanding, the spiritual lords do think it injury and wrong to themselves if the king should substitute civil magistrates to this business; yet, as it is said, that is God's own ordinance; and to do otherwise—namely, to commit either spiritual or civil government, diocesan or provincial, to ministers of the Word is evil; and, as we believe, a direct transgression of the text of the gospel."

From this it is plain, that the assertion which has sometimes been made in our day, respecting the in-

compatibility of Congregational Independency with the civil establishment of religion is not absolutely true; since the Congregational Independents of this period, or some of them, sought that civil oversight and interference, which, in later periods and in other countries, have actually been connected with the system.

On the whole, then, we are compelled to admit, that there was a departure from the principles of Browne on the part of the Barrowists, the exiles, and the rigid puritans. Were there, then, any parties who had more just views respecting this subject at this time? We think there were; and that these were Independents also; but "members of a calumniated and despised sect, few in number and poor in circumstances." * We refer to the baptists, or, as they were termed in that day, anabaptists. The peculiar circumstances in which they were placed led them no doubt to examine more searchingly into the principles on which mutual toleration should be based, and they were gradually led to advocate those broad and enlightened views which have since been so extensively diffused in later times.

The first work in which liberty of conscience was *avowedly* advocated, was published by Leonard Busher, a citizen of London, and entitled "Religion's Peace; or a Plea for Liberty of Conscience." † Although printed in 1614, it was "presented to King James and the High Court of Parliament," some time be-

* Price's Hist. of Nonconformity, i. 523.

† This has been republished by the Hanserd Knollys Society, in the volume entitled "Tracts on Liberty of Conscience." It is referred to approvingly by Orme, in his Memoirs of Dr. Owen, p. 74. But, then, Robinson's Justification of Separation is spoken of in similar terms, in relation to our present topic.

fore, as we are informed on the title page. Busher was probably one of Smyth's congregation in Amsterdam, and came over to England with Helwisse in 1611—12. We cannot, however, regard his treatise as fully answering to its title; neither can we consider it as containing a "clear, broad, and explicit statement of the doctrine of religious liberty."* The argument against *persecution* is in some respects ably conducted; but the basis on which the theory of religious liberty is built, is very much narrowed. For example; in the petition to king and parliament, after explaining how the "one true religion is gotten by the Word and Spirit of God alone," he proceeds as follows:—

"Seeing, then, the one true religion of the gospel is thus gotten, and thus defended and maintained—namely, by the word preached only; let it please your majesty and parliament to be intreated to revoke and repeal those antichristian, Romish, and cruel laws, that force all our land, both prince and people, to receive that religion wherein the king or queen were born, or that which is established by the law of man. And instead thereof, enact and publish that apostolic, Christian, gentle, and merciful law of Christ; viz.: '*Go, teach all nations, preach the gospel to every creature.*' That is, Christ will have his ministers to preach and teach the people of all nations, the things that concern the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Messiah, repentance and remission of sins, and to baptize in his name such as do believe." †

This would give authority to king and parliament to follow their own convictions of what the gospel

* Broadmead Records, Historical Introduction, p. lxxxiv.

† Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, p. 16.

allowed them to do, in matters of religion; and to "enact and publish," in their civil capacity, "the law of Christ." Surely, Busher would not set himself up as the infallible interpreter of the spirit and law of the gospel. If, therefore, king and parliament took a different view respecting what the gospel authorized them to do in religious matters, they would be justified on the *principle* of this petition in acting and enacting in accordance with that view. So far, this is not a "broad statement" of the doctrine of religious liberty; but really and practically, a very narrow one.

Neither is the passage quoted above an isolated one, and the inference we have deduced from it, an unfair one. The *spirit* of it pervades the whole treatise, even the "reasons against persecution." Busher did not clearly see the distinction between private and public grounds; and hence he urges many things as reasons, that were no doubt good reasons so far as his private views were concerned, but very poor ones as presented to king and parliament. In one part he endeavours to prove that "the church of Rome, called catholic," and "those that are descended of her, and have received their ministry and ordination from her," never could be "the apostolic church, called primitive church." He also exhorts his majesty "not to beautify his court and presence with any popish stones, not with one, though it be of alabaster." This is urged not on political grounds alone, but on certain doctrinal views, drawn from scripture, in chapter and verse, respecting the "mystical woman, the great Babylon." Moreover, one of his "rules," for the furtherance of liberty of conscience and the preservation of "peace and quietness," contains a singular restriction, and as singular a reason in favour of it.

He would have it to be "lawful for every person or persons, yea, Jews and papists, to write, dispute, confer and reason, print and publish, any matter touching religion, either for or against whomsoever." So far, good. He adds, however, "always provided they allege *no fathers* for proof of any point of religion, but *only the Holy Scriptures*."* Thus he narrows his ground, and vitiates the argument. But let us hear his reasons for this exception. "By which means, both few books will be written and printed, seeing all false ministers, and most people, have little or nothing else, besides the fathers, to build their religion and doctrine upon. Or if it be once *established by law*, that none shall confirm their religion and doctrine by the fathers, and by prisons, burnings, and banishing, etc., but by the Holy Scriptures; then error will not be written nor disputed, except by obstinate persons and seared consciences, seeing the Word of God will be no shelter for any error.

"Yea, I know by experience among the people called Brownists, that a man shall not draw them to write, though they be desired; for one of their preachers, called Master Robinson, hath had a writing of mine in his hands above six months, and, as yet, I can get no answer. It seems he knoweth not how better to hide his errors, than by silence. And this will be the case of all false bishops and ministers, who had rather be mute and dumb, than to be drawn into the light with their errors."

No wonder Robinson refused to reply to a writer, who could draw a grave argument on liberty of conscience to so "lame and impotent a conclusion." But we have further evidence in this treatise that Busher

* Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, p. 51.

was not an advocate for what is now regarded complete religious freedom. The following passages show his mind better than the title of his work. Speaking of his majesty, he says, "and though, as Josiah, he finds, by reading in the book of the New Testament, a great alteration of the apostolic faith, and change of the ordinances and laws of Christ within his dominions; yet not to be dismayed, as Henry le Grand, but be encouraged, as Josiah, to labour, and endeavour the redress thereof, according to the mind of Christ in his New Testament. And I doubt not, but as Jacob the patriarch prevailed with God and men, so shall Jacob the king prevail both with God and men, especially being his chief steward, by his New Testament."* In this passage king James is exhorted to take the "apostolic faith," and "ordinances and laws of Christ," under his care, for their "redress," as Josiah did the laws of God, under a former economy. Henry le Grand, or Henry the Fourth, of France, although a papist himself, granted liberty of conscience to all his protestant subjects, by the edict of Nantes, in the year 1598. But this was not enough for Busher: he would have king James purify the church from all its corruptions, according to the mind of Christ. He goes on, therefore, afterwards to express his desire that the "spiritual lords and idol-bishops" might be pulled down;"† and affirms that it is the "duty of the king and state to *seek the conversion of their subjects* by the Word of God, and not their destruction by fire and sword."‡ He also humbly prays "his majesty and parliament to repeal and make void all popish laws and canons, and to see the moral and judicial laws of God both firmly enacted and carefully

* Tracts, &c., p. 57. † Page 66. ‡ Page 68.

practised, after the mind of Christ. And then shall Christ's spiritual throne be established in the hearts and consciences both of king, prince, and people, etc." *

We have, we think, adduced enough to show, that Busher, at least, did not "dissert upon and argue for religious liberty in its fullest sense."† Neither is his treatise worthy of the title that has been given to it, as "the earliest treatise known to be extant on this great theme."‡ It is a good treatise against persecution; but nothing more. Long before this, King James had advocated as much as is contained in this treatise; as may be seen in the various quotations in the writings of the baptists themselves.§ Some of the princes of Europe, also, had granted toleration to the various religious sects in their dominions, and forbidden persecution. In Poland, Bohemia, and Holland, that which he petitioned for had long been enjoyed. In the last-named country, Busher and the other exiles had shared in the privilege of an unmolested worship, according to the dictates of their own consciences. And yet, in none of these countries was the principle of liberty of conscience, "in its fullest sense," properly understood. The utmost tolerance of sects was not deemed inconsistent with a state establishment of religion.

Although we are compelled to regard Busher's work as defective on the great subject of liberty of conscience, there were other parties amongst the baptists who understood the subject better, and advocated it

* Tracts, &c., p. 69.

† Broadmead Records, Hist. Int. p. lxxx.

‡ Tracts, &c. p. 6.

§ Tracts, &c., pp. 140, 190, 216, 227, 231, 334, 380.

with unexceptionable consistency. In their Confession of 1611, they held, "that the magistrate is not to meddle with religion, or matters of conscience, nor compel men to this or that form of religion, because Christ is the King and Lawgiver of the church and conscience." To this article of their Confession Robinson objected, in the spirit of the quotation already made from his writings; and in such a manner as to show, that he regarded the baptists as denying the right of the civil government to interfere in any way with the religious opinions of its subjects. Indeed, after quoting some prophecies relating, according to his views, to the interference of the state with the affairs of the church, he asserts that the baptists labour under "the common disease of all ignorant men, in pleading against the use of the ordinance by the abuse." * This is sufficient to prove that the baptists were supposed to hold extreme views on the subject of religious liberty; and so far from contradicting Robinson's interpretation of them, they avowed and justified it. In 1615, some of their number, supposed to be John Murton and others, published an exposition of their views, entitled, "Objections answered by way of Dialogue, wherein is Proved by the Law of God, by the Law of our Land, and by his Majesty's many Testimonies, that no Man ought to be Persecuted for his Religion, so he testifies his Allegiance by the Oath appointed by Law." † In the last page of this work, it is expressly stated, that the object of the writers is to answer the objections urged against their views

* Of Religious Communion, &c., p. 130.

† This was republished in 1662, with some additions and omissions, under the title of "Persecution for Religion Judged and Condemned."

"concerning persecution for religion," and more particularly "the principal things of Mr. Robinson's late book."

The principal topic discussed in this Dialogue is expounded in a simple, dignified, and conclusive manner. No concessions are made involving state interference with religion. No exceptions and limitations are introduced which mar the consistency of the theory of an absolute religious liberty. The following passages may serve as specimens of the whole:—

"The power and authority of the king is earthly, and God hath commanded me to submit to all ordinances of man; and therefore I have faith to submit to what ordinance of man soever the king commands, if it be a human ordinance, and not against the manifest Word of God; let him require what he will, I must of conscience obey him, with my body, goods, and all that I have. But my soul, wherewith I am to worship God, that belongeth to another King, whose kingdom is not of this world; whose people must come willingly; whose weapons are not carnal, but spiritual."

In answer to the question, "Is this all the authority that you will give to the king?" the answer is, "What authority can any mortal man require more, than of body, goods, life, and all that appertaineth to the outward man? The heart God requireth. He commanded to give unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to himself the things that are his. Now, if all the outward man be Cæsar's, and the inward man too, so that he must be obeyed in his own matters and in God's matters also, then tell us what shall be given to God?"

Again:—"I acknowledge unfeignedly, that God

hath given to magistrates a sword to cut off wicked men, and to reward the well-doers. But their ministry is a worldly ministry, their sword is a worldly sword, their punishments can extend no further than the outward man, they can but kill the body. And therefore this ministry and sword is appointed only to punish the breach of worldly ordinances, which is all that God hath given to any mortal man to punish. The king may make laws for the safety and good of his person, state, and subjects, against the which whosoever is disloyal or disobedient, he may dispose of at his pleasure. The Lord hath given him this sword and authority, foreseeing, in his eternal wisdom, that if this his ordinance of magistracy were not, there would be no living for men in the world, and especially for the godly; and, therefore, the godly have particular cause to glorify God for this his blessed ordinance of magistracy, and to regard it with all reverence. But now, the breach of Christ's laws, of the which we all this while speak, which is the only thing I stand upon; his kingdom is spiritual, his laws spiritual, the transgressions spiritual, the punishment spiritual, everlasting death of soul, his sword spiritual, no carnal or worldly weapon is given to the supportation of his kingdom."

Once more:—"Magistracy is God's blessed ordinance in its right place; but let us not be wiser than God to devise him a means for the publishing of his gospel, which he that had all power had not, nor hath commanded. Magistracy is a power of this world: the kingdom, power, subjects, and means of publishing the gospel, are not of this world."

Such were the enlightened views of these parties. While many of the Independents were anticipating a

conjuncture of circumstances, in which it might be possible for the magistrate to interfere for the propagation and enforcement of the laws of Christ, after their own interpretation of them, these men, following in the steps of Robert Browne, sought to dissever the connexion between magistracy and religion as an unscriptural and iniquitous alliance. Neither should we forget that, while the parties thus distinguished by their early advocacy of an obnoxious but just principle were Congregational Independents, they were but a comparatively small and despised section of them. At the same time, it should be borne in mind, that the principles of Independency had only to be rightly understood in order to lead to convictions similar to those which the baptists cherished and avowed with so much fidelity. Brownists, Barrowists, separatists, rigid puritans, and baptists, had in common an element of truth, which, sooner or later, would operate, according to the law of affinity, in drawing to itself other elements subversive of all domination in matters of religion.

CHAPTER III.

INDEPENDENCY IN ENGLAND, HOLLAND, AND NEW ENGLAND, DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE REIGN OF JAMES THE FIRST. 1616—1625.

After the period referred to in the last chapter, various events occurred of some importance in relation to our subject. Principles were spreading amongst the people, which the vacillating policy of James in political and ecclesiastical matters, confirmed in the minds of their advocates. The court party was given to change, according to the fashion of the monarch, while the puritan party received continual accessions, notwithstanding the severe measures practised against it; and every onward impulse of the popular mind was a preparation for the diffusion of juster and more liberal views. In tracing the history of this period, from the elevation of Abbot to the death of James, it is impossible not to perceive that, amidst many fluctuations and apparent recessions, it was a period of considerable progress in relation to principles.

During the early portion of his reign, James was supposed to favour Calvinistic doctrines; and the fact of his sending over to Holland, in 1618, four Calvinistic divines, to represent Great Britain in the Synod of Dort, seemed to indicate that his views were unchanged up to that period. Heylin, however, has affirmed that he acted thus, "not out of judgment, but

for reasons of state, and from a personal friendship to Prince Maurice," the leader of the Calvinists, in opposition to the Arminians. Whatever may have been his real judgment in the matter of difference, is difficult to ascertain, and of little consequence.* It was not likely that a monarch who lived so loosely as James, would care much for purity of doctrine. When it served his purpose, he could play the part of the Calvinist or Arminian, the protestant or the papist. The great question with him respected the augmentation of his authority and revenue. Whether truth or error was to secure his favour, depended upon the sinister purpose of the moment. He became, in fact, a nucleus of corruption. That minister of state alone could secure his confidence, who knew how to fleece the people, and pander to his vices; and those clergy alone belonged to the true church, and held orthodox sentiments, who preached up the royal prerogative, and inculcated subserviency and submission amongst his subjects. Sycophancy, effeminacy, and dissoluteness of the grossest kind, characterized the court, and contaminated a large portion of the nation; while the church, infected with the same vices, assumed higher pretensions, and became more persecuting in proportion as it departed from its avowed design, as the religious teacher of the people. Meanwhile, the puritan party — one section of which, as we have already seen, was Independent—grew in numbers and influence. In a manner not altogether unobserved at the time, it was drawing to itself the best portions of

* Heylin's statement (Hist. Presb. p. 381) seems confirmed by the fact that such men as Buckeridge, Neile, Harsnet, and Laud were soon after this promoted to some of the chief bishoprics. All of them high Arminians. Neal, i. 492.

the nation. Its representatives in parliament were increasingly powerful in resisting the advances of prerogative, and giving voice to popular complaint. Thus truth was advancing, amidst much that was obnoxious, and in spite of much that was hostile to her claims. Scarcely a single public event occurred that did not directly or indirectly strengthen the popular party, either by eliciting the folly and tyranny of the monarch, or by provoking to indignation and resistance.

The "Book of Sports," drawn up by Bishop Moreton, and published in 1618, was a singular proof of the short-sightedness of the rulers of the day in church and state; and the reasons alleged in justification of its enforcement, show the extent to which puritanism prevailed. "The puritans," says Heylin, "by raising the Sabbath, took occasion to depress the festivals, and introduced, by little and little, a general neglect of the weekly fasts, the holy time of Lent, and the embring days." He then adds, that "several preachers and justices of the peace took occasion from hence to forbid all lawful sports on the Lord's day, by means whereof the priests and jesuits persuaded the people that the reformed religion was incompatible with that Christian liberty which God and nature had indulged to the sons of men. So that to preserve the people from popery, his majesty was brought under a necessity to publish the 'Book of Sports.'"*

In keeping with the above, the declaration was entitled "A Declaration to Encourage Recreations and Sports on the Lord's Day," and was to the following effect: "That for his good people's recreation, his majesty's pleasure was, that after the end of divine service, they should not be disturbed, letted, or dis-

* Heylin's Hist. of Presb. p. 389.

couraged from any lawful recreations; such as dancing, either of men or women, archery for men, leaping, vaulting, or any such harmless recreations; nor having of may-games, whitsun-ales, or morris-dances, or setting up of may-poles, or other sports therewith used, so as the same may be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or let of Divine service; and that women should have leave to carry rushes to the church for the decorating of it, according to their old customs; withal prohibiting all unlawful games to be used on Sundays only, as bear-baiting, bull-baiting, interludes, and (at all times in the meaner sort of people, by law prohibited) bowling."*

Such were the ingenious provisions adopted for the spread of the protestant religion, and the prevention of popery. To render them yet more effectual in alluring people to the church, it was declared that no papist should have the benefit of them, nor such as were not present during the whole period of Divine service preceding the season of recreation; nor such as did not attend their own parish churches, that is, the puritans. The effect of this declaration on the public mind may be easily inferred. The papists and puritans were confirmed in their position, and the establishment gathered to its bosom all that was debased, without in any way augmenting its strength.

Previous to this, John Selden, one of the most learned men of that age, had published a work on the history of tithes, in which he proved that they were no longer of Divine, but of human institution; and although, from fear of consequences, he had been induced to make a public acknowledgment of his "error

* Neal, i. 486. Fuller's Church Hist., book x. cent. xvii. sects. 55, 56.

in publishing"* it, it produced a great effect on the public mind. Many undertook to reply, but with little success; and according to Fuller, "never a fiercer storm fell on all parsonage barns since the Reformation, than what this treatise raised up."†

While England was thus kept in a state of agitation, James was fomenting division and raising up opposition to his government in Scotland. In 1617, he made a royal progress into that country, the ultimate object of which was the advancement of the episcopal cause. Pictures, and statues of the twelve apostles, were set up in the chapel of Edinburgh, and his majesty gave a lecture to the parliament and general assembly, on his prerogative to dispose external things in the church as he and his bishops might think fit. Acts were passed respecting the election of bishops and archbishops, and the restitution of chapters; and in the following year, an assembly was convened at Perth, where five articles were passed by the authority of the court and bishops, which roused the indignation of the presbyterians. Many laborious ministers were deprived; and at a later period the king's commissioner issued a proclamation, commanding all ministers to depart out of Edinburgh within twenty hours, except the settled ministers of the city, and such as were licensed by the bishop. Protestation was in vain. The court party prevailed. Many godly men were fined, imprisoned, and banished by the high commission. Further measures were contemplated, relating to the imposition of the book

* It is worthy of note, that Selden did not recant what he had written. He studiously avoided that, by referring to "publishing," and offering "occasion of argument" only. Neal, i. p. 484.

† Church Hist. x. xvii. 36, 37.

of Common Prayer on the Scotch people at large; but the dread of an universal insurrection prevented their enforcement. As it was, the Scotch were now completely alienated from the court, and their sympathies enlisted on the side of the puritans in England.*

An event occurred about this time, which, though trivial in itself, affected the future policy of the church of England. "A sad mischance," says Fuller, "befell George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, in this manner: he was invited by the lord Zouch, to Bramshill, in Hampshire, to hunt and kill a buck. The keeper ran among the herd of deer to bring them up to the fairer mark, while the archbishop, sitting on his horseback, let loose a barbed arrow from a crossbow, and unhappily hit the keeper."† The keeper was killed, and "the fame of this man's death flew faster than the arrow that killed him." Although an accident, the archbishop's reputation suffered by it, and whatever influence he had before was diminished. Thus a way was made for the advancement of Laud, and from this period he became more potent than before in the council of the sovereign, and in the church. ‡

The state of the nation became more and more perilous. Abroad the policy of the monarch was marked by consummate folly, while at home both parliament and people were treated with the greatest indignity. In order to obtain a Spanish wife for his

* Neal, i. 483, 484.

† Church Hist. x. xvii. 12—17.

‡ This occurred in 1621; the same year in which Lord Bacon was degraded from his office of Lord Chancellor for receiving bribes.

son, he allowed his son-in-law Frederick, to be cast out of his hereditary dominions by Ferdinand of Austria; as well as out of Bohemia, to the throne of which he had been chosen. When the House of Commons remonstrated against the intended match, on protestant grounds, he forbade their meddling with anything concerning his government; and on their persisting to do so, dissolved parliament, and committed their leading members to prison. To add to the public grievances, the papists were encouraged, the advocates of liberty were imprisoned,* and fresh restraints were laid on the puritans. While the penal laws against the recusants were suspended, directions were given to the archbishop, which carried into effect would clear the church of England of all the conscientious and zealous ministers remaining in it. These directions forbade all preachers, except bishops and deans, from preaching more than once a Sunday; and then they were not to "presume" to discourse on the "deep points of predestination, election, reprobation; or of the universality, efficacy, resistibility, or irresistibility of God's grace." Neither were they to presume to "declare, limit, or set bounds to the prerogative, power, or jurisdiction of sovereign princes, or meddle with matters of state." While they were not to rail against either papists or puritans, they were at the same time to "free the doctrine and discipline of the church from the aspersions of both adversaries." Nor were these directions a mere

* A Mr. Knight was imprisoned in the Gate-house, for preaching a sermon before the University of Oxford; in which he asserted that subordinate magistrates might defend themselves, the commonwealth, and true religion, against the chief magistrate, when he became a tyrant. Neal, i. 494.

form; since it was added, that all offenders against any of these injunctions were to be suspended from their office and benefice "for a year and a day, till his majesty should prescribe some further punishment with advice of convocation." * Before this, the puritans had suffered for neglect of ceremonies only; but now they were excluded from interpreting the doctrines of the gospel. Such as refused to preach up the royal prerogative, and to declaim against evangelical doctrines, were termed "doctrinal puritans;" and as Archbishop Abbot, the chief of the party, had retired from court in consequence of the misfortune that had befallen him, there was little or no restraint laid upon their persecutors of the high church school. Many were deprived and imprisoned; and numbers left the country for liberty of conscience' sake, and fled to other lands.

Such was the course of ecclesiastical affairs during the latter part of the reign of James the First.

While these events were happening at home, a way was being prepared for the diffusion of the principles of Independency, in a hitherto unpeopled region of vast extent, and under circumstances of special interest. New England was already destined, in the providence of God, to become a widened sphere for the development of civil and religious freedom.

Soon after the formation of Jacob's church, in London, or in 1617, Robinson and the church at Leyden entertained the purpose of emigrating to America. Who first entertained it, we have not ascertained. The project, however, was not entirely new. In 1608, some puritan families had emigrated from England to

* Neal, i. 495, 496.

Virginia; and more would have followed, but for an interdict procured by Archbishop Bancroft, who, refusing liberty of conscience at home, was unwilling to let his victims seek it abroad. Two companies also existed—one in Plymouth, and the other in London—under the name of the Virginia Company, with a chartered power under the royal patent, to make settlements on that extensive country.* Virginia was at this time divided into north and south; and, since the year 1614, the northern division was becoming known under the name of New England. It was to this portion of Virginia that the emigrants already referred to had repaired; and although their enterprise had been very unsuccessful, Robinson and his people were not to be discouraged from making another adventure in the same direction.

The reasons which moved the Leyden congregation to contemplate this step, were the result of serious deliberation. They were, as they expressed themselves, in a land of strangers, who differed from them not only in language and manners, but in their religious observances, more especially in relation to the keeping of "the Lord's-day as a Sabbath." Their countrymen, who came over from England to join them, were repelled by "the hardness of the country," and for the most part forced to return; so that there was no great hope of much addition to their numbers or usefulness. Their children were, some of them, overtasked by their heavy labours, and became "decrepit in their early youth;" while others were drawn away into wild and dangerous courses, through the evil examples of the licentious youth in the neigh-

* Young's Chronicles of the Pilgrims, p. 54, note 3. This work is our chief authority; all others are more or less erroneous.

bourhood. Their posterity, they felt assured, "would in a few generations become Dutch," and lose all "their interest in the English nation," a thing greatly to be deprecated. Lastly, they had "a great hope and inward zeal of laying some good foundation for the propagation and advancement of the gospel in those remote parts of the world," and were willing to embark in the enterprise, even if they should prove only "stepping-stones unto others for the performance of so great a work."

After these reasons had been maturely considered, and much time spent in humiliation and prayer, both in private and in public, they agreed to emigrate, if Divine Providence did not throw any insuperable obstacle in their way. It appears that they had some debate among themselves whether they should go to Guiana or New England, in consequence of some overtures on the part of their Dutch neighbours, who wished them to settle in one of their colonies.* They decided at length, however, on Virginia, where, while under British government, they hoped to be free to follow their own religious convictions.

In order to carry out their design, they sent two agents to England, to make arrangements with the Virginia Company, and with the privy council. The negociation proved fruitless. The company, indeed, cheerfully assented, and King James seemed to approve of their enterprize; but the bigotry of the ecclesiastical rulers prevailed against them. His majesty was willing to connive at their project, should they conduct themselves peaceably; but was either unwilling or afraid to grant them a religious toleration under his public seal. Archbishop Abbot, it is said, was

* Young's Chronicles, p. 42—note 2, p. 52.

obstinate in his refusal to sanction their object, and Laud, whose evil star was rising, was too consistent to lend his approval. After a year's negociation, therefore, the two agents returned to Leyden unsuccessful.

Notwithstanding this discouragement, they determined to persevere in their original design. In February, 1619, they sent over "two other agents," who, in the course of that year, were successful in procuring a patent under the Virginia Company's seal, in the name of a Mr. John Wincob, "a religious gentleman belonging to the Countess of Lincoln, who intended to go with them." Although it so happened that Mr. Wincob did not go with them, and his patent was never used, yet the circumstance of the Virginia Company sending the patent over to the Leyden congregation, with certain "proposals for their transmigration," decided them to prepare at once for the voyage. The year 1620, however, had arrived before this decision. On receiving this intelligence, they devoted a day to prayer and fasting, when their pastor preached to them "a very suitable sermon," from 1 Sam. xxiii. 3, 4; "strengthening them against their fears, and encouraging them in their resolutions." After this, it was determined that all who could make ready should prepare at once, by converting their property into money; and that these should emigrate first, as "an absolute church of themselves," under Mr. Brewster; while the remainder, under Mr. Robinson, should wait until a favourable opportunity offered for them to follow.

The necessary preparations were now entered upon. A small ship of sixty tons was purchased and fitted out in Holland, and another of about a hundred and eighty tons was hired in London. The former, which

was called the *Speedwell*, was intended for the future service of the colonists; the latter, called the *May-flower*, was engaged for the emigration only. These and other preliminaries having occupied some months, they set apart another day, early in June, for purposes of devotion. Robinson, on this occasion, preached from Ezra viii. 21, "I proclaimed a fast there at the river of Ahava, that we might afflict our souls before God, to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones, and for all our substance."* The discourse was not printed, but the following passages have been preserved from the notes of those who heard it:—

"Brethren, we are now quickly to part from one another; and whether I may ever live to see your faces on earth any more, the God of heaven only knows. But whether the Lord hath appointed that or not, I charge you, before God and before his blessed angels, that you follow me no further than you have seen me follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

"If God reveal anything to you by any other instrument of his, be as ready to receive it as ever you were to receive any truth by my ministry; for I am verily persuaded, I am very confident, the Lord hath more truth yet to break forth out of his holy Word. For my part, I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a *period* in

* The next verse has been referred to as appropriate to the occasion; but it does not appear that Robinson included it in his text. The verse is as follows:—"For I was ashamed to require of the king a band of soldiers and horsemen to help us against the enemy in the way: because we had spoken unto the king, saying, The hand of our God is upon all them for good that seek him: but his power and his wrath is against all them that forsake him."

religion; and will go, at present, no further than the instruments of their first reformation. The Lutherans cannot be drawn to go beyond what Luther saw: whatever part of his will our good God has imparted and revealed unto Calvin, they will rather die than embrace it. And the Calvinists, you see, stick fast where they were left by that great man of God; who yet saw not all things. This is a misery much to be lamented; for though they were burning and shining lights in their times, yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God: but were they now living, they would be as willing to embrace further light, as that which they first received.

"I beseech you to remember it, it is an article of your church covenant, That you will be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known unto you from the written Word of God. Remember that, and every other article of your most sacred covenant. But I must here withal exhort you to take heed what you receive as truth: examine it, consider it, compare it with the other Scriptures of truth, before you do receive it; for it is not possible the Christian world should come so lately out of such thick antichristian darkness, and that perfection of knowledge should break forth at once.

"I must also advise you to abandon, avoid, and break off the name of Brownist! It is a mere nickname, and a brand for the making of religion, and the professors of religion, odious unto the Christian world. Unto this end, I should be extremely glad if some godly minister would go with you, or come to you, before you can have any company. For there will be no difference between the unconformable ministers of England and you, when you come to the practice of

evangelical ordinances out of the kingdom. And I would wish you by all means to close with the godly people of England. Study union with them in all things, wherein you can have it without sin; rather than in the least measure to affect a division or separation from them. Neither would I have you loth to take another pastor besides myself; inasmuch as a flock that hath two shepherds is not thereby endangered, but secured." *

The Speedwell was now waiting for them at Delfshaven,† a sea-port town twenty-four miles south of Leyden, eight of Delf, and two miles south west of Rotterdam. Towards the middle or end of July, Robinson and his congregation had reached the place, and many other parties from Amsterdam, who had come "to take their leaves of them."‡ The night before the embarkation "was spent with little sleep by the most, but with friendly entertainment and Christian discourse, and other real expressions of true Christian love." At length, the day of separation arrived. "The wind being fair, they went on board, and their friends with them; where, truly doleful was the sight of that sad and mournful parting: to hear what sighs, and sobs, and prayers, did sound amongst them; what tears did gush from every eye, and pithy speeches pierced each other's heart." So affecting was the scene, that "sundry of the Dutch strangers

* Ecc. Hist. of New England, Mather, p. 14. Winslow's version, from which Mather borrowed his, is to the same effect. Young, pp. 396—399.

† The name of this town is variously spelt:—Delf Haven, Delft Haven, Delfs Haven, and Delfshaven. Delfs Haven, or Delfshaven seem most correct. Robert Morden's map spells it Delfshaven.

‡ Amsterdam was fifty miles from Delfshaven.

that stood on the key as spectators, could not refrain from tears."

But now the tide favoured, and the friends must part. They fall down, therefore, on their knees, and their pastor commends them, "with most fervent prayers, unto the Lord and his blessing." Then, "with mutual embraces and many tears," they take what proved "to many of them a last leave;" after which, Robinson, and the friends with him, step on shore. They hoist sail; the gale is prosperous; and in a short time the Speedwell, with its precious burden, has vanished from their sight! *

This was on the 22nd of July, 1620. On arriving at Southampton, the May-flower was waiting for them, "having some English friends on board, who proposed removing with them." † After making the necessary preparations for the voyage, they divided themselves into two companies, one for each ship; and, with the approbation of the captain, each company chose a governor and two or three assistants, to preserve order and distribute the provisions. Before setting sail, they receive an affectionate letter from Robinson, reminding them of their religious duties, imparting most judicious counsel respecting their temper and demeanour towards one another, and preparing their minds beforehand to act a noble part when they should "become a body politic, using amongst themselves civil government." This letter, we

* It does not appear, as commonly represented, that the parting scene was on the sea-shore but on board the Speedwell, which was probably drawn up alongside the "key."

† Winterbotham's Historical View of the United States, in four volumes. Vol. ii. p. 20. Ses also Jedidiah Morse's American Geography (1792), pp. 151, 152.

are informed, had "good acceptance with all, and after-fruit with many."

The two vessels set sail on the 5th of August; but the Speedwell proving leaky, in the judgment of Reynolds the captain, they put into Dartmouth for repairs. This delayed them till the 21st of August, when they set sail again. They had not proceeded more than a hundred leagues from land, when the captain of the Speedwell again complained of the condition of his vessel, and refused to proceed any further with her. In consequence of this untoward event, both vessels put back to Plymouth, and the Speedwell was abandoned. It is thought that Reynolds was guilty of treachery, since the Speedwell performed many voyages afterwards with perfect safety. Both companies now united,* and embarked finally in the May-flower, on the 6th of September. Our space forbids our entering into any details respecting the voyage, which was tedious and perilous.

On the 11th of November, 1620, these pilgrims from the old world entered Cape Cod harbour; and before they anchored, "fell upon their knees, and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from so many perils and miseries."†

Not being within the limits of their patent, and "observing some not well affected to unity and con-

* The number was too great for one vessel; and therefore Mr. Cushman and some others returned in the Speedwell to London, much against their will. They went over in the Fortune next year. Prince, p. 161.

† According to Bradford and Winslow, this act of devout thanksgiving was performed on the May-flower. Only fifteen or sixteen were permitted to land the first day, and these were armed, in order to be prepared for any surprise.

cord," their first act was to establish themselves under a separate government, as a dependency of the British empire. A solemn contract, therefore, was entered into, and subscribed on the day of their arrival. The document was signed by forty-one heads of families, with the number of their respective families annexed, numbering, in the whole, one hundred souls. Mr. John Carver was chosen governor for the first year; the venerable Brewster retaining his office as ruling elder to the community, in its religious capacity.* Their next object was to obtain a convenient settlement. The difficulties and dangers they had to encounter in accomplishing this part of their object, were all but insurmountable. It was winter, and the season unusually severe; many were in a weak and sickly condition in consequence of the voyage; their provisions were poor and scarce; the Indians, unaccustomed to strangers, were shy and hostile; and the coast was one with which they were unacquainted. But their leading men were of the right stamp. Inured to hardships, and animated by the noblest principles, they were adequate to any emergency. After making several exploring adventures in the ship's "shallop," they fixed upon a place called by the Indians "Patuxat," as the scene of their desti-

* Brewster was in many respects a remarkable man. He was educated at Cambridge, and was under secretary to Mr. Davison, secretary of state to Queen Elizabeth. While acting in this capacity, he was employed in a service of great trust in Holland, which may have led afterwards to his repairing with Robinson to that country. He was never ordained as the minister of the colonists; but preached amongst them for about seven years after their settlement in New England. He died on the 16th of April, 1644, in the 80th year of his age. Neal's New England, vol. i. pp. 79, 211. For a full account, see Young's Chronicles, pp. 462—470.

nation. Hither they brought their entire company, in the following December,* and in commemoration of the mother country, and the last English town of whose hospitality they had shared, they called the place New Plymouth.† A large portion of the rock on which they landed is now deposited in the centre of the town, the foundations of which were then laid, and the names of the brave adventurers grace the iron enclosure in which the memorable relic is preserved.

It is beyond our design to trace the history of these pilgrims any further; neither could justice be done to the subject without devoting considerable space to it. Suffice it to say, that "the little one" soon became "a thousand," and "the small one a strong nation." A mighty people dates its origin from these beginnings. In succeeding periods New England became an asylum for those who were oppressed and persecuted in Old England; and although some sad errors were committed in the early policy of the colonists, as a necessary consequence of defective views respecting the great principle of liberty of conscience, they had enough of truth and piety amongst them to extricate them out of their difficulties, and to lead them eventually into the right course. The Carvers and Bradfords, the Winslows and Standishes of New England's early history, transferred from Leyden the defective theory of John Robinson, respecting the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion; but in connexion with what was defective, they derived from the

* One of their number died during the voyage, and one was born. The list of names and numbers generally referred to, includes the name of the party who died—thus making 101.

† This is the common account. It is affirmed, however, that Capt. John Smith gave it this name in his map of 1616.

same source so much that was calculated, in the progress of things, to rectify the defect, that their names are still honoured by a grateful posterity, and are ever likely to be so, as of the founders of a mighty republic, in which religion and liberty have grown up side by side.

A few particulars will not be out of place here, respecting some of the more prominent individuals whose names have frequently occurred in the preceding pages, and who died in the period embraced by this chapter.

Henry Jacob, after presiding over the church in London for about eight years, emigrated to New England in 1624, and shortly afterwards died.*

Henry Ainsworth became sole pastor of the church at Amsterdam, on Johnson's retiring to Embden, and remained in that office until his death, in 1623. Although a great controversialist, he was a man of a meek and peaceful spirit; and his various works, more especially his Annotations on the Pentateuch, and other portions of the Old Testament, afford abundant evidence of the laboriousness of his life. Governor Bradford, who knew him well, has given the following sketch of his character. After calling him "a man of a thousand," he adds: "A very learned man he was, and a close student, which much impaired his health. We have heard some, eminent in the tongues, of the university of Leyden, say that they thought he had not his better for the Hebrew tongue in the university, nor scarce in Europe. He was a man very modest, amiable, and sociable, in his ordinary course and carriage, of an innocent and unblameable life and conversation, of a meek spirit, and a calm temper,

* Neal, i. 447.

void of passion, and not easily provoked. And yet he would be something smart in his style to his opposers in his public writings; at which we that have seen his constant carriage, both in public disputes and the managing of all church affairs, and such like occurrences, have sometimes marvelled. He had an excellent gift of teaching and opening the Scriptures; and things did flow from him with that facility, plainness, and sweetness, as did much affect the hearers. He was powerful and profound in doctrine, although his voice was not strong; and had this excellency above many, that he was most ready and pregnant in the Scriptures, as if the book of God had been written in his heart; being as ready in his quotations, without tossing and turning his book, as if they had lain open before his eyes, and seldom missing a word in the citing of any place, teaching not only the word and doctrine of God, but in the words of God; and, for the most part, in a continued phrase and words of Scripture. In a word, the times and place in which he lived were not worthy of such a man."* It has been affirmed by some, that he died by poison; and various stories have been published respecting the cause of this violence. Happily, however, an eyewitness of his death has afforded explicit testimony to the contrary; testimony prefixed to Ainsworth's Annotations upon the Song of Solomon, and published in the same year in which that death occurred. The words of this witness are to the effect that he was "comfortable in his death to all the beholders, of which there were many, myself being one."†

* Young's Chronicles, pp. 448, 449.

† Hanbury, i. 433, 434.

Richard Clyfton died at Amsterdam, soon after the embarkation of the pilgrims, and at an advanced age. When he first went to Holland he is said to have been "a grave and fatherly old man, having a great white beard." According to the same testimony, he was "sound and orthodox, and so continued to his end."*

John Robinson intended and earnestly desired to have gone over with the remainder of his flock to New Plymouth; but was prevented by various circumstances. He died at Leyden on the first of March, 1625, the same year in which James the First died, and in the fiftieth year of his age. A letter from Leyden conveyed the tidings of his decease to the settlers in New Plymouth in the following terms:—" It has pleased the Lord to take out of this vale of tears your and our loving and faithful pastor, Mr. Robinson. He fell sick on Saturday morning, Feb. 22nd. Next day, taught us twice. On the week, grew weaker every day, feeling little or no pain. Sensible to the last. Departed this life the first of March, 1624-5. Had a continual inward ague. All his friends came freely to him: and if prayers, tears, or means would have saved his life, he had not gone hence."† His death was "mourned as a public loss;" and "the magistrates, ministers, scholars, and most of the gentry of Leyden followed him to the grave."‡

Besides the works already mentioned, Robinson published some others which deserve to be recorded. In 1618, he expressed his views in favour of what would now be termed lay-preaching, in a work entitled

* Governor Bradford's Dialogue, in Young's Chronicles, p. 453.

† New England Chronology, Hanbury, i. 463.

‡ Prince, p. 238.

"The People's Plea for the Exercise of Prophecy." In this treatise he contends for the practice of other parties, besides the pastor or teacher, being permitted to address the church in its religious assemblies, as a lawful practice "from the beginning;" and adds with great earnestness, "The Lord give unto his people courage to stand for this liberty amongst the rest, wherewith Christ hath made them free; and unto *us who enjoy it*, grace to use the same unto his glory, in our mutual edification."* It is worthy of consideration how far the neglect of this practice has impaired the efficacy of the churches' ministrations in later times.

In the following year he published his "Apology," already adverted to. The synod of Dort was holding its sessions at the time; and Robinson seized the opportunity of presenting to the representatives of the several churches of Europe, a faithful statement respecting the faith and polity of the despised separatists. On this account the work was written in Latin, with the following title, "Apologia justa, et necessaria quorundam Christianorum, æque contumeliose ac communiter dictorum *Brownistarum* sive *Barrowistarum*; per Johannem Robinsonum, Anglo-Leidensem, suo et ecclesiæ nomine, cui præficitur."† The work is divided into twelve chapters, each chapter comprising a distinct subject. It is to the use of the word "independently"

* Page 77. Hanbury, i. 356.

† "A Just and Necessary Apology of Certain Christians, no less contumeliously than commonly called Brownists or Barrowists; by John Robinson, an Anglo-Leydener, in his name and that of the church over whom he is placed." Hanbury has "Brownistarum *ac* Barrowistarum," instead of "*sive*." The copy we quote from is in Coward College Library, and bears the date of 1619.

in the first of these chapters, that some have attributed the origin of the name Independent, as the designation of a religious party. We have seen, however, that some years before this the word was used in the same manner by Jacob. In 1625, Robinson published his latest work, entitled "Essays, or Observations Divine and Moral: collected out of Holy Scriptures; ancient and modern writers, both divine and human; as also, out of the great volume of men's manners: tending to the furtherance of knowledge and virtue, etc." Our space forbids any extracts from these works, all of which are worthy of careful perusal. We have, however, already adverted to such points in them as are most important in relation to our history.

From what has been adduced in this and the preceding chapter, it is evident that the course of affairs was now tending in a very definite direction. The palmy days of Elizabeth had departed. Popular principles, both in relation to political and religious matters, were advancing amongst those who at a former period scarcely dared to think of themselves as having any rights beyond what the monarch might condescend to acknowledge. The circulation of the Scriptures had exerted a mighty influence on the public mind of the nation. Persecution had failed to extirpate error, so called; and hierarchical pretensions, combined as they were with the exercise of arbitrary power, gradually produced by a natural and necessary reaction, a strong anti-hierarchical party. While the timid cowered under the shadow of the establishment, and became conformists through fear; the more courageous separated from her communion under various pleas, and became stronger from year to year. At

the time of James the First's death, according to Roger Coke, the nation was rent into four parties: the prerogative or court party, the legal or country party, the popish party, and the puritan party. The court party and the popish party were closely allied; and as they became "more insolent," the puritan party "gathered strength and reputation," and became "in number more than all the other three." * Neither can there be any doubt that of the puritan party the Independents were the most dreaded by the churchmen of that day, on account of the ecclesiastically disintegrating character of the principles they advocated. To the more penetrating it was evident that if the principle of Congregational Independency were to become popular, there would be an end of all hierarchical subordination and domination, and eventually of all that was worth contending for in the connexion between church and state. On this feature of the system of Independency, therefore, they looked with the most alarm, and even ventured to give expression to their fears. "There needs no prophetical spirit," said Bishop Hall, in 1622, "to discern, by *a small cloud*, that there is a storm coming towards our church: such a one, as shall not only drench our plumes, but shake our peace." Two years after, in a sermon preached before the king, he pointedly refers to the principle we have named as becoming popular, and gives vent to his feelings in relation to the fact. "Surely," he says, "if we grow unto that anarchical fashion of *Independent congregations*, which I see, and lament to see, affected by *too many*, not without woful success; we

* A Detection of the Court and State of England, &c., vol. i. p. 206. Hanbury, i. 467.

are gone, we are lost, in a most miserable confusion." *

In these prophetic anticipations this keen ecclesiastic displayed much sagacity. While, in a theoretic point of view, Individual Independency or liberty of private judgment is the germ, and Aggregate Independency the full compliment, of the system of Independency considered as a consistent whole; Congregational Independency has ever proved the most practically powerful feature of the system, superinducing the other two where previously wanting, and shielding them where they have existed already. At this time, in particular, the separatists, rigid puritans, and baptists, however divided in other respects, were one in the judgment of such men as Bishop Hall, inasmuch as they all followed the "anarchical fashion of Independent congregations." As we advance in our historical narration, it will become yet more evident that this was in fact the pillar of the system in relation to all others antagonistic to it.

* Hanbury, i. 466.

CHAPTER IV.

INDEPENDENCY IN THE EARLY PART OF THE REIGN OF CHARLES THE FIRST. 1625—1633.

The reign upon which we have now entered was so eventful in relation to our subject, as well as to other important matters connected with it, that it is necessary to trace more consecutively than hitherto the course of public affairs, both in church and state. While the advocates of Independency were a proscribed and exiled sect, who had no part or lot in the nation but that of suffering whatever indignity might be heaped upon them, it was scarcely needful to do more than indicate their own separate history. Now, however, when they gradually emerge from obscurity, and become not only an integral but influential part of the community, their history necessarily involves a more ample reference to contemporaneous events.

Charles the First came to the throne at a critical period and under peculiar circumstances. Deformed in body, of a dogged temper, he had also the misfortune to be educated in opinions better suited to the head of an absolute than of a constitutional monarchy; and that, too, at a time when popular principles were daily gaining the ascendant in the nation over which he was called to rule. In addition to this he inherited with the crown, the duplicity of his father, James the First, who, though presiding as the

head of a Protestant nation, sought for his son a Catholic alliance, reckless of all the consequences it was likely to involve. Never did the boasted king-craft of James more effectually over-reach itself, than when he signed the articles of marriage between his son Charles and Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry the Fourth, and sister of Louis the Thirteenth, of France. This, his last public act, was the signal termination of a career remarkable for the want of practical wisdom, and devolved upon his successor the long series of troubles which ended in dethronement and death. The smallest amount of political sagacity might have shown him, that in the existing temper of the nation, of which he had had repeated proofs, no step could have been more ill-advised. But it was too late to retract. The death of James, shortly after, seemed to seal the contract; and before the funeral obsequies had been performed the ceremonial of marriage was consummated.

The articles of marriage embraced provisions of a special nature in reference to the religion of the queen. Not only were the penal laws against Roman Catholics to be suspended, and the queen to be unmolested in the full and free observance of all the rites of the Romish church; but intercourse between her majesty and Rome, for the purpose of obtaining dispensations, indulgences, jubilees, and all other graces, for herself and her household, was on no account to be prohibited, and her children were to be educated by persons of her own appointment, until they had arrived at the age of thirteen.*

If the character of her majesty had been in all respects unexceptionable, such provisions as these, in

* Rushworth, i. 86.

respect to herself, her children, her household, and the subjects of the realm who happened to be of her religion, could scarcely have failed to excite the jealousy of the Protestant portion of the nation, by far the largest portion at this time. Unhappily, however, the queen was as imperious, as, in the estimation of Charles, she was beautiful; and her addiction to intrigues "of all sorts," rendered her position all the more offensive to the people, and prejudicial to the interests of the king.*

These were not the only disadvantages under which Charles ascended the throne. His father's favourite and unprincipled minister, Buckingham, had been politic enough to keep on good terms with the son for many years past. Suiting himself to his humour, and flattering his vanity, he had completely ingratiated himself into his favour, and secured his confidence. At the same time, the court clergy with Laud at their head were prepared for the present to lend their sanction to any measures, calculated to give them influence over both king and people. Thus, from the very commencement of his reign this unfortunate monarch was the dupe of others. Catholic at heart, and yet called to reign over a protestant nation; nursed in prejudices and one-sided views of his prerogative, although in reality nothing more than the chief of a constitutional monarchy; he was at fault from the very first. His position was altogether artificial. Intrigue and duplicity, therefore, were the essential elements of his rule; and the only counsellors fitted to aid him in the accomplishment of his aims were such as were most fertile in expedients and stra-

* See the testimonies of Clarendon, Burnet, and Kennet, in Neal, i. 506, 507.

tagems of state. If he had occupied the throne at an earlier period, he might possibly have succeeded in taming the nation down to sullen acquiescence in his designs; but, as it was, any sagacious mind might easily have foreseen the probable result of the protracted struggle into which he was driven.*

The first year of Charles's reign witnessed the commencement of decisive proceedings on the side of the parliament. The then Bishop of Chichester, Richard Mountagu, had published a work in 1624, which on account of its offensive doctrines respecting the royal prerogative and the authority of the church, parliament had sought to suppress and censure. As if to spite the representatives of the people, Mountagu was taken into the number of Charles's chaplains; and imagining himself secure under cover of the royal favour, republished his views under a new title, not less significant than the former.† The Commons immediately summoned Mountagu to their bar, and would have proceeded to extreme measures, but for the interference of the king. As it was, he was held to bail in the sum of two thousand pounds, to make his appearance whenever required. Laud, who had been the means of procuring the aid of the monarch on Mountagu's behalf, perceived accurately enough the effect thereby produced on the temper of the Commons. "I seem to see a cloud arising," were the

* Less than two years after Charles ascended the throne, Withers the poet predicted the civil war, in his "Britain's Remembrancer."

† The first title was "A Gag for the New Gospel? No! a New Gag for an Old Goose, &c." The second was "Apello Cæsarem (I appeal to Cæsar): a just Appeal from two unjust Informers."

words recorded in his diary at this time, "and threatening the church of England: God in his mercy dissipate it!" Whatever may have been the private prayer of the ambitious churchman, his public acts were not calculated to dissipate the cloud whose appearance he so much dreaded.

The first parliament was dissolved in less than three months, and another was called in February, 1626, at the opening of which, Laud, as "the Bishop of St. David's," preached a sermon similar in spirit and doctrine to that of Mountagu, only managed with more caution and policy. The parliament, however, was not to be turned from its purpose. Although some of the most popular leaders had been excluded by an unconstitutional act of the king, it was composed of men of high patriotism and courage. Mountagu's books were censured in a series of articles, the seventh of which was to the following effect:—"That the said R. Mountagu has endeavoured to raise factions among the king's subjects, by casting the odious and scandalous name of puritans upon those who conform to the doctrine and ceremonies of the church. That he scoffed at preaching at lectures, and all shows of religion; and that the design of his book was apparently to reconcile the church of England with the see of Rome." * In addition to this, the Commons in their debates pointed to Buckingham as the author and abettor of many of the grievances under which the nation laboured, and refused to grant the subsidy required by the king, until these and other important matters were adjusted. The king was blind to the perils which beset him in this crisis, and although he had already promised a redress of grievances, threw

* Rushworth, p. 209; Neal, i. 516.

his shield of protection around both the obnoxious parties. He became even angry in their defence. "I will have you know," said he to the Commons, "that I will not allow any of my servants to be questioned among you; much less such as are of eminent place, and near unto me."* Henceforth it was more palpable than before, that the contest between despotic government and constitutional liberty had begun.

On the parliament's refusing to yield, it was dissolved suddenly on the 15th of June of the same year; and the king determined to try how far he could govern without such aid. From this moment the monarch was, in intent, guilty of high treason against the state; and had the people possessed a power equal to their rights, they would have been justified in arraigning and dethroning a king who sought to undermine the constituted authorities of the realm. Such, however, was not the case. At prosent all the power was on the side of the monarch, and the nation had to endure whatever the court, whether in its civil or ecclesiastical department, chose to impose. The most arbitrary measures were adopted to secure revenue. Recourse was had to the Council, the Star-Chamber, and the High Commission Court, instead of the usual methods of law and justice.† For a season the liberties of the

* Rushworth, 220.

† The Council-Table and the Star-Chamber were two departments of the same legislature. The first enjoined by proclamations what was not enjoined by law. The second censured by fine and imprisonment the breach of what had been enjoined by the former. The origin of the High Commission Court we have already stated. Besides being an ecclesiastical court, it now became a court of revenue—and anything else that rapacity and malice dictated. Hist. of the Rebellion, i. 121, 496; Neal, i. 508—510; Price's Hist. of Nonconformity, ii. 14—16.

nation were trampled under foot; and, according to the testimony of a reluctant witness, "those foundations of right, by which men value their security, were never more in danger to be destroyed."*

During this period the high church party had ample scope for carrying out their designs. The publications of the doctrinal puritans were suppressed; the High Commission Court put forth its best efforts to extirpate anti-prelatical heresy; and all law was set aside in order to accomplish the ends of ecclesiastical subjugation. An expedient was devised at this period, or in 1627, for the purpose of getting rid of the formal supremacy of Archbishop Abbot, which for a season was successful. He had long been an object of enmity to the court, on account of his "stiffness and averseness to comply with their designs."† The puritans looked up to him, as almost their only remaining friend of high station in the church; and although he had rendered them but little service, the known fact that his opinions were coincident with theirs, involved him in the obloquy that fell to their lot. The occasion of Abbot's sequestration from his office was his refusal to license a sermon by Dr. Sibthorp, which inculcated the doctrine of passive obedience, and the duty of paying the taxes recently imposed by the king in the shape of a forced loan. Although the king importuned the old ecclesiastic to grant the license, he persisted in his refusal; and hence his suspension. In a few months, for certain

* Hist. of the Rebellion, i. 121. See Vaughan's Hist. of England under the House of Stuart, i. 227—230, for an account of the manner in which the "forced loan" was levied and resisted.

† Fuller's Church Hist., xi. xvii., 51, 52.

political reasons, he was restored to his office; but during the interval an opportunity was afforded to Laud of coming into his place, as one of the five commissioners who were to manage the affairs of the primacy in his stead. In this short space of time the aspirant to power enjoyed the foretaste of future pre-eminence, and afforded abundant proof to the nation of the perils to which it was exposed; acquiring an ascendancy at court which increased year after year, until all the objects of his ambition were gratified.

The king was compelled in 1628 to summon a third parliament. The plan of extortion that had been adopted was not successful, and the unwise policy of Buckingham had involved the nation in a fruitless and expensive war with France; so that although Charles professed to "abominate the name" of a parliament, and tried every likely and unlikely method of securing revenue without one, he was under the necessity of calling it together. His advisers also were sagacious enough to perceive that, after what had happened, it would be needful to conciliate the Commons, in order to obtain from them the needful subsidies. Archbishop Abbot, therefore, was restored to his functions, and multitudes who had been imprisoned for refusing the forced loan to the king were liberated. The temper of Charles, however, betrayed itself in threatening expressions at the first meeting, and determined the Commons to proceed cautiously but firmly to their duty as the representatives of the people. The circumstances of excitement under which the elections had been conducted, and the wealth and character of the members themselves, rendered this parliament one of the "most honourable" assemblies ever con-

vened within the walls of the House.* Coke, Selden, Eliot, Pym, Hampden, Philips, Seymour, Wentworth, were the popular leaders. Cromwell, also, made his first public appearance as member for Huntingdon. On this account alone, if on no other, this parliament must ever be memorable.†

Oliver Cromwell was, probably, the first Independent that entered the House of Commons as a representative of the people. At this time, however, he was characterised more by his earnest piety, and hatred of popery, than by anything else for which he was afterwards famous. "He had grown up in peace and privacy at home, silently cherishing in his heart a confidence in God, and a magnanimity well adapted for the solemn times that were approaching. Although of ripe years, he had not yet stepped forward into public life, and nothing so much distinguished him from all around as the cultivation of a pure reli-

* "The freeholders in the train of some of these commoners greatly exceeded those under the influence of the most considerable of the lords, and the aggregate wealth of the lower house was said to be three times greater than that of the upper." Vaughan's Hist. of England, &c., i. 233.

† Now that the cloud of reproach is being rolled away from the memory of Cromwell, the testimony of Milton, another of the great lights of that age, and himself an Independent, may be heard without incredulity. "Speaking of so great a man, who has laid the republic under such signal obligations, I should do nothing if I only exculpated him from crime; since it concerns especially not only the republic, but myself, so closely conjoined with him in the same evil report, to demonstrate to all nations, and far as I can to all ages, how excellent his character, and how worthy of all praise." Defensio Secunda; Milton's Prose Works, Child's Edition, p. 728.

gion, and the integrity of his life."* In one way, however, he had already signalised himself, namely, by the zealous support he had rendered to the godly preachers of his day. He was not ashamed of the testimony of Jesus; but boldly avowed his faith in the gospel, and chose his friends amongst such as entertained the same views. Hampden, Pym, Lord Brook, Lord Say, and others, men of high moral character and great religious sincerity, were his intimates. Neither had he been unconcerned in a matter lately set on foot for advancing the cause of truth, to which more ample reference will be made in a future page.

In a House of Commons so composed, it was not likely that the recent exactions would be suffered to pass without censure, as a violation of the liberties of the nation. One of the first things attended to was this very matter; and the result was the adoption of the famous Petition of Right. This petition reminded the king of the rights of the people and parliament, and required an acknowledgement on the part of his majesty, that no man ought to be "compelled to make or yield any gift, loan, benevolence, tax, or such like charge, without common consent by act of parliament." After a mean attempt to prevent the passing of the bill embodying the petition into a law, he at last gave his assent in due form; and the triumph thereby achieved by the Commons in favour of law was greater than any

* Ibid. See also, The Protector: A Vindication. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigné, D.D., first edition, p. 42. Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, by Thomas Carlyle, is a work to which the reviving fame of Cromwell is chiefly indebted. Its appearance and success may be looked upon as providential.

since the time when Magna Charta was extorted from King John. Other matters of a similar nature having been dispatched, parliament was prorogued from the 26th of June to the following January. In the interval an event happened which brought Laud nearer to the person, and rendered him more indispensable in the councils, of the sovereign. This was the death of Buckingham, at Portsmouth, by the hand of an assassin. The graceful but profligate minister, fell in his thirty-sixth year, lamented by few, and denounced by the Commons as a "national grievance." About the same time Sir Thomas Wentworth apostatized from his principles and party; went over to the court; and became Buckingham's successor.

At the next meeting of parliament the first business entered upon was the state of religion. Few, indeed, were they, who at this period understood the great principles of civil and religious liberty. How to resist oppression, was the chief topic of debate amongst the most liberal of those days. As to attempting the practical separation of the church from the state, the bare conception was considered utopian. Probably amongst the very few who had studied the question of liberty of conscience, in all the length of its bearings, there were none who saw how, under existing circumstances, their views could be carried out. The puritans, generally speaking, were in favour of an establishment. The presbyterian puritans, looking to Scotland, sympathized with the system which had been connected with civil sanction and influence in that country, and which, notwithstanding many attempts to subvert it since the days of John Knox, still retained a position of considerable power and consolidation. The rigid puritans, or Congregational

Independents, were also in favour of state interference with religion; but only in a civil manner, and without ecclesiastical modes of connexion between church and state. If they had been asked at this time what they wanted, in relation to this matter, they would probably have said: "We desire as much freedom in religion as is compatible with good order and the welfare of the nation. Believing that each separate congregation should be allowed to manage its own religious affairs, according to the mind of Christ in his New Testament, in the election, maintenance, and deposition of officers, as also in the admission or exclusion of members, and all other matters of a directly religious nature; we are, nevertheless, willing to have our congregations united in a persuasive synod, which shall never be invested with power to do more than afford counsel to the congregations whose representatives are associated in it; and we are also willing that the state should acknowledge our church constitution as scriptural, and in case of necessity interfere, as chief magistrate, to rectify any disorders amongst us. We further admit that it is a duty devolving upon the state, to encourage and provide for the preaching of the gospel amongst the ignorant and unconverted, and in the gentlest way that can be devised, to compel, if necessary, its unwilling subjects to the hearing of God's word." Such, we believe, to have been the views, however erroneous, of the great majority of the Independents of this period. Individuals might be found, here and there, chiefly amongst the baptists, who held more extreme views; but their voice was scarcely heard until a later period. Now, however, all these points of difference were postponed for a season, in consideration of a more

important question, affecting all parties alike, namely, the perils which threatened the nation in the rapid advances of popery.

Having arrived at this point, a few remarks are needful to a right understanding of the light in which popery was regarded at this period, as well as of the policy adopted by the liberal party in respect to it. These remarks are all the more needful, inasmuch as modern historians and other writers, of liberal principles, generally except the conduct of the popular leaders of this age, in respect to this matter, from the praise which they so readily bestow upon them on almost all other grounds.*

It should be observed, then, that at this period there were two opinions or convictions very generally entertained throughout protestant Europe, more especially by such as were in any way interested in political affairs. The first of these opinions was, that a state could not exist without some recognized form of religion; and the second was, that both on scriptural and political grounds, popery was the worst that could be adopted. If the first of these opinions had not so universally prevailed, the second would not have been associated with so much intensity of feeling. As, in modern times, the most alarmed and furious enemies of popery are those evangelical protestants who advocate the theory or abet the practice of a

* Dr. Price, for example, in his Hist. of Nonconformity, (vol. ii. p. 27,) expresses his "indignant remonstrance" against what he terms the "barbarous treatment" of the papists by this parliament. And, yet, the same writer has no remonstrance to make against their treatment of Mountagu, Manwaring, and others, for merely publishing their opinions; but on the contrary, quotes Hume in justification of the temper they displayed. (Ibid. p. 32.)

state establishment of religion; so, in the age now referred to, the Calvinistic party dreaded popery, because they had no other idea than that there must be an established religion of some kind. Had other views prevailed to any extent respecting the first point; had the bare possibility of the existence of a state without any recognized state-religion, occupied the public mind; had the views of Robert Browne and John Murton, on this subject, affected the convictions of the popular politicians and statesmen of the day; much more had such views been recognised as just and safe;—there would have been less of alarmed feeling in reference to the aggressive attempts of popery, just as in the present day there is less of that feeling amongst the advocates of entire liberty of conscience, because they are such. Had the opinion of that period been in favour of a separation of the church from the state, we should, probably, have had to record a series of measures, in opposition to popery, very different in spirit and tendency from those that were actually adopted. And yet, even on such a supposition, there would have been nothing to object to, if, under the circumstances in which they were placed, the popular leaders had made it one of their principal aims to preserve the liberties of the country against the insidious efforts of Rome. The measures might have been different, but their object would have been the same. Neither would there have been any inconsistency in this, in respect to such a foe to liberty as popery has ever proved. Had it been possible, at that period, to have secured the practical recognition of the great principle of liberty of conscience, it would not necessarily have followed that a system essentially and avowedly despotic,

should have been permitted to shelter itself under a plea derived from that recognition. If popery had ever been a system of opinions merely, the case would have been different. However gross the superstitions connected with it, it might have been admitted to an equal footing with other systems of opinion under a perfectly free and just government. But it has never had this simple character. It has ever been essentially political. Its very pretensions have been hostile to civil and religious liberty. Its avowed design has ever been the subjugation of mind, life, and liberty, everywhere, to the will of its ecclesiastical head; that head being always a foreign potentate. The suppression of popery, therefore, would in reality have been no more inconsistent with perfect freedom, than the suppression of any other political system which, emanating from some foreign despot, and worked by his agents, avowed the purpose of converting a free nation into a nation of dependent vassals. The only open question would be, how a system, so insidious on account of its religious pretensions, could be most effectually dealt with? *

* The Eclectic Review for September, 1847, p. 300, advances similar views to those propounded in the text. "To grant him," that is, the papist, "his right, as a man, is one thing; to sanction his encroachment on the rights of others, or shut our eyes to the dangerous tendencies of his system, is another. After allowing him to reach the level of his fellow-citizens, it is high time to form a barrier against the ambition that would overwhelm them; and say, 'Thus far shalt thou go, and no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed.'" We are glad to see this position assumed by this anti-state-church organ. The only practical question remaining is, Can you allow the papist to reach what he would consider "the level of his fellow-citizens," without at the same time opening the door to that which would "overwhelm them?"

These observations on the general subject will prepare the way for a correct view of the conduct of the great protestant party in England, in this and succeeding periods. The puritans, whether conformists or nonconformists, presbyterians or episcopalians, made no secret of their enmity to popery in all its forms. They looked upon it as an emanation of spiritual despotism. They were prepared to wage war upon it with a clear conscience, from disinterested motives, and in the spirit of the most expansive benevolence. They dreaded its advances as more devastating than the plague. It was for something dearer than life that they contended when they grasped, each one, the hilt of his sword, and declared that they were ready to die rather than succumb.* In this feeling, the Independents generally, and the patriots —even such as were not avowedly connected with the puritans—sympathized. Nor were the fears of all these parties without cause. The power of Rome had for some time been recovering itself, and its cautious policy had attracted the admiration, as well as disarmed the jealousy, of even protestant princes. On the other hand, the evident tendency of the Reformation towards a liberty unwonted in the age of popish supremacy, caused many rulers and governors to regard it with repugnance. In England, while protestantism had been striking its roots deeper and deeper in the hearts of the people, it had at the same time been gradually loosing its hold on the monarch and his

* Sir John Eliot stated in his place in the house, about this time, that in some churches the people not only stood up at the repetition of the creed, but with their swords drawn, in testimony of their determination to resist to the death every attempt to win them over to popery.

court. King James had often looked wistfully towards Rome, and, for the sake of the influence it seemed to promise him over his subjects, would have returned to its confidence, if he had dared. And now Charles, with his popish wife and semi-popish clergy, was apparently attempting to hand the nation over to a domination more likely to be successful for his purposes than his own.

It is not to be wondered at that, in such circumstances, the representatives of the people set themselves with so much determination to oppose the spread of popery. Policy also moved them to act thus. They had the law on their side; and while no charge of disloyalty could be brought against them while they sought the enforcement of the statutes, they were at the same time most effectually intercepting the progress of the monarch in his covert designs. The measures they insisted upon were harsh and unsuited to the object for which enactments against popery would, in other circumstances, have been passed; but no alternative remained but that of permitting the king to hurry them on towards Rome without a single check, or doing what they did.*

When the parliament met again, a great portion of their time was occupied in considering the religious condition of the nation. They had already published a remonstrance, the presentation of which to the king had been prevented by the prorogation. In this, their views were amply propounded respecting the encourage-

* Neal (i. 524—526) quotes a letter, written about this time, from a jesuit in England to a friend at Brussels, which shows how highly the hopes of the catholic party were raised at this juncture. The puritans are spoken of as the chief obstacles to their success.

ment afforded to popery and Arminianism, and the severity exercised towards the puritans. An answer had also been published in the name of the king, in which the complaints of the Commons were met in an evasive manner; and a "declaration" was prefixed to the thirty-nine articles, forbidding discussion on all points bearing on the Arminian controversy.* The effect of the declaration — so worded as to favour the doctrines of the puritans, but so managed as to give the ecclesiastical commissioners power to determine what it meant, and who had violated it—was the very opposite of that which it purported to have in view. While many of the court clergy, or Arminians, had been promoted for publishing their views,† the puritans had been questioned in the Star Chamber, and their works suppressed. Moreover, instead of carrying out the laws against the catholics, commissioners had been appointed to compound with them for their recusancy; by which means the revenue of the king had been considerably augmented. These things were not overlooked by the Commons.

Oliver Cromwell, who had been appointed one of a committee to inquire into these matters, made a report of the results to which the investigation had led. This was the first occasion on which he addressed the House. According to the testimony of an eye-witness, he wore a plain cloth suit; his linen was not of the

* This declaration was drawn up by Laud, in the name of the king. Laud was now Bishop of London.

† Though there is no necessary connexion between arminian doctrine and intolerance, it has generally so happened in the history of the church of England that the two have gone hand in hand together.

purest white; his ruffles were old-fashioned; his hat was without a band; his sword stuck close to his side, his countenance swollen and reddish, and his voice sharp and untunable; but he had a manly air, a sparkling eye, and a stern look. * He was warm and animated, and made his report in an earnest manner. He mentioned the countenance given by Neil, bishop of Winchester, to Arminian and popish preachers, and the favours bestowed by the king upon Mountagu and Manwaring, notwithstanding the censures passed upon them by the parliament.† He complained, that the bishops lent their sanction to the preaching of "flat popery;" and added, indignantly, "If these be the steps to church-preferment, what are we to expect?"

Other parties spoke in the same temper. The House voted, that the object of the "declaration" was to suppress puritanism, and to give liberty to "the other side." The new ceremonies introduced by Laud and others into the churches, with images and pictures of saints and angels, crucifixes, altars, lighted candles, and so forth, were severely commented upon. Rouse, Pym, and Eliot, expressed themselves strongly against the spirit and practice of the court clergy, and were highly applauded. A protest was entered on the books against the jesuitical interpretation put upon the articles of the church, and a clause recently in-

* Memoirs of Sir Philip Warwick, 247. Rushworth, i. 667.

† Manwaring had published a sermon, entitled "Religion and Allegiance," in which he set up the authority of the king as above all law. For this he was ordered to appear before the bar of the house, and was finally sentenced by the lords to be imprisoned during pleasure, to pay a fine of a thousand pounds, and to be suspended for three years. Almost immediately afterwards the king pardoned and promoted him.

serted by Laud, in a new edition of those articles, to the effect that "the church hath power to decree rites and ceremonies, and hath authority in matters of faith." * Sir John Eliot, in urging this protest, warned the House of an insidious design, not only to disturb the religious faith of the people, but also to enslave the persons and consciences of free men. He denounced the clause as a trick by which to secure to the heads of the church of England the exclusive power of introducing Arminianism and popery, under pretence of explaining the ancient articles; and concluded as follows: "I give this for testimony, and thus far do I express myself against all the power and opposition of these men. Whensoever any opposition shall be, I trust we shall maintain the religion we profess, for in that we have been born and bred; nay, sir, if cause be, in that I hope to die. Some of these, sir, you know, are masters of ceremonies, and they labour to introduce new ceremonies into the church. Some ceremonies are useful. Give me leave to join in one that I hold necessary and commendable,—that at the repetition of the creed we should stand up, to testify the resolution of our hearts that we would defend the religion we profess. In some churches, it is added, that they do not only stand upright with their bodies, but with their swords drawn! And if cause were, I hope,—to defend our prince, country, and religion,—*we* should draw our swords against all opposers."

Such was the spirit of these men. Their zeal was not according to knowledge; but no friend of liberty

* This clause had no place in the articles published in the reign of Edward the Sixth, nor in the edition sanctioned by parliament in 1571.

can refuse his sympathy, considering the dangerous crisis at which the nation had arrived. It would have been better if they had sought to lay the axe to the root of the tree whose fruit was so bitter; but these vigorous attempts to lop off the poison-bearing branches are not to pass without the meed of praise.

After this, the popular leaders took into consideration the seizure of merchants' goods, and the levy of tonnage and poundage by the king's officers, contrary to the provisions of the Bill of Rights.* The king interfered to prevent further proceedings, and addressed a speech to both Houses, on the 24th of January, in which he rebuked the Commons, and complimented the Lords. The former, however, were not to be turned aside from their purpose. The sheriff who had seized the merchants' goods was called to the bar of the House, and afterwards sent to the Tower. Several officers of the customs were made to answer for a similar offence; and the barons of the exchequer were called upon to explain their conduct in aiding and abetting. On the 25th of February a report was presented to the House, of "heads of articles to be insisted on." These articles, relating to religion and the alterations introduced by Laud and his party, alarmed the monarch, who sent a command to both Houses to adjourn to the 26th of March. On the speaker's delivering the command, he was reminded that it was not his business to deliver any such message, and that adjournment was a matter for the House alone to determine. Instead of adjourning,

* Three merchants — Richard Chambers, Samuel Vassal, and John Rolls—had submitted to a seizure of their goods, rather than pay the tax collected under the names of tonnage and poundage. The last named merchant was a member of the House.

therefore, they determined on a remonstrance, to the effect that the receiving of tonnage and poundage, and other impositions not granted by parliament, were "a breach of the fundamental liberties of this kingdom, and of the royal answer to the petition of right." Sir John Eliot, also, prepared a protestation in three articles, the two last of which related to tonnage and poundage, and the first of which was as follows:— "Whoever shall bring in innovation in religion, or by favour, seek to extend or introduce popery or Arminianism, or other opinions disagreeing from the true and orthodox church, shall be reputed a capital enemy to this kingdom and commonwealth."

On the 2nd of March, 1629, these resolutions were proceeded with. As soon as prayers were ended, Eliot rose, with the air of one prepared to submit to any sacrifice rather than shrink from the discharge of his duty. He denounced the Bishop of Winchester, and the lord treasurer Weston, as enemies of the commonwealth.* He described the latter as employing his secret influence with the king for the abolition of parliaments; and expressing his fears that this influence would be too successful, concluded by declaring his own determination, if parliament were adjourned, to begin again on its re-assembling at the matter where he now left off, until the liberties of the people were fully confirmed. Then advancing to the speaker, he requested him to read the remonstrance he had prepared for the king, that it might be put to the vote. Thereupon ensued one of the most remarkable scenes ever witnessed in that House. The speaker,

* Weston was a papist, and had lately been promoted by Charles. It is doubtful, however, whether at this time he had made any avowal of his religion.

fearing the consequences, refused to read the protest.* Eliot then requested the clerk at the table to read it. The clerk also refused. Eliot then, undismayed and fully resolved, read the document himself, and demanded of the speaker to put it to the vote. The speaker excused himself, stating that "he was commanded otherwise by the king." Selden reminded him of the paramount duties of his office. The speaker replied that he had an express command from his majesty to deliver the message of adjournment, and then to vacate the chair. He was rising to do so, when Holles, Valentine, and several other members, advanced, and forced him back to his seat. Some of the privy council came to the rescue; but in vain. Holles swore the speaker should be seated until it was the pleasure of the House that he should rise. With tears in his eyes, he implored that he might be permitted to withdraw. His tears were unavailing; the Commons had a great duty to perform, and that might be their last opportunity for some time. Sir Peter Hayman, a kinsman of the speaker, renounced him as a disgrace to a noble family, and reproached him for his pusillanimity in such a crisis. After the disorder had somewhat abated, Eliot placed the three articles of protest in the hands of Holles, and Holles

* The speaker's name was Finch. On a previous occasion he had shown himself unfit for his office, by interrupting Sir John Eliot in the middle of his speech. Eliot was proceeding to refer to Buckingham, who was then living, when Finch started from his chair, and with tears in his eyes said, "There is a command upon me to interrupt any that should go about to lay an aspersion on the ministers of state." Eliot submitted to the interference then; but he had had time to reflect on the duties of a speaker since that period, and was wiser now. See Mackintosh's Hist. of England continued, vol. v. p. 94—96.

read and put them to the vote. Meanwhile, a message was sent from the king, commanding the serjeant-at-arms to terminate the session by bringing away his mace. The serjeant was detained by the House, and the door locked. The usher of the black rod came next, knocking at the door in the king's name. All entrance was refused. In a transport of rage, Charles sent his guard to force open the door. But the resolutions had by this time been carried amidst loud acclamations, together with a motion of adjournment to the 10th of March following; the doors were thrown open; and the members had dispersed before the guard arrived.

Such was the termination of this parliament. On the 10th of March the king formally dissolved it, after a speech in which he pointedly referred to the patriot members of the House of Commons as "vipers" who should have their "reward of punishment." The threat was immediately carried into effect. Eliot, Holles, Selden, Valentine, Coryton, Hobart, Hayman, Long, and Stroud, were cited before the privy council, and committed to the Tower. A declaration was issued explaining the reasons for the dissolution, followed by a proclamation announcing the determination of the king to govern the nation without parliaments, and forbidding the mention of them. The die was now cast. Charles had deliberately made up his mind to rule by prerogative. Notwithstanding the experience he had acquired respecting the temper of the Commons, and of the people who so largely sympathized with them, he was fully resolved upon a course that would inevitably lead to his own ruin. The infatuated king, blinded by wounded pride, would not see the danger to which

he was exposed, and which his impolitic conduct was increasing every year. Because his chief enemies were caged in the Tower, and the necessary instruments for effecting his purposes were gathered around him, he imagined himself safe.* With a council fertile in arbitrary expedients, and judges prepared to confirm the legality of his measures; with the court of Star Chamber for a hall of judgment, ever ready to respond to his royal will and execute his vengeance, and with a body of court bishops only too willing to eulogize his misdeeds and minister to his vanity;—why should he fear any mischance in the accomplishment of his despotic aims! For a season he was apparently successful; but after that brief season had passed, retribution overtook him and he was overwhelmed.

The reign of tyranny commenced with the prosecution of the patriots, the narration of which is one of the most interesting portions of English history. Our space forbids our entering into any details. Never was law so prostituted; never were judges so tampered with and so recreant; never did attorney-general act so shameless a part. In vain was the Petition of Right, so recently assented to, pleaded by the counsel for the patriots. The forms of legal procedure were gone through, but malice and revenge presided and prevailed. For the discharge of their duty in the House, these representatives of the people were sentenced to imprisonment during the king's pleasure, to be fined in several sums from two thousand to five thousand pounds, and not to be released

* For a brief but interesting account of the members composing Charles's Council, see Mackintosh's England, vol. v. p. 121—125.

without security for good behaviour and submission for their offences.*

From this time all public affairs were directed by proclamation of the king and council. Imposts were laid upon every species of merchandize, and under various pleas more than a million yearly was extracted from the people. This grievance was submitted to with great forbearance, but not without a growing expectation of being able to remove it at some future period. Severe as was the trial of temper to which the system of extortion exposed the nation, it was not so irritating as that which originated in the ecclesiastical progress of affairs. Laud was now the presiding genius of the church. He had gradually insinuated himself into power, and by skilful management had secured the confidence of the king. It is difficult to form a proper estimate of his character. While his own party have been divided respecting his merits, his enemies have added needless depth of shadow to the dark portraiture of his infamy. Perhaps the briefest and yet fullest description of him would be—that he had all the instincts of the ecclesiastic, and that opportunity favoured their development. Alternations, therefore, of meanness and pride, sycophancy and cruelty, self-sacrifice and ambition, sacerdotal pietism and remorseless inhumanity, marked his conduct, according as he looked upwards or downwards,—on his Creator, king, and church—or

* Sir John Eliot died in prison, Nov. 27th, 1632. For a faithful and earnest biography of this great man and martyr, see Forster's Life of Eliot; and for this portion of his history, Vaughan's History of England, vol. i. 255—258. Also, Price's Hist. of Nonconformity, vol. ii. 38—44.

on his subordinates and victims. The only check upon him at the present time, was the prolonged existence of Archbishop Abbot, whose puritan leanings served to preserve his inferior from that inordinate excess of despotism which the church and nation were destined to witness. It has been affirmed by Neal, that Laud aimed at uniting the two churches of England and Rome.* This, however, may be more than doubted. As he rose in office, he appears to have been less given to such policy, and to have aspired to an English popedom which should centre in himself. He had a passion for managing the church; and he sought to gratify it at all hazards. His ideal was in the Romish system; but he was of too practical a turn to pass the power out of his own hands. He would have made the pope a creature of his own, if he could. At the same time, the measures he adopted were essentially popish; and hence the alarm with which his progress was viewed by all that abhorred popery, whether from sectarian motives, or from higher considerations connected with the love of civil, intellectual, and spiritual freedom.

One of the first things by which the evil influence of Laud was felt throughout the nation, was a measure that tended to rid the church of all parties unfavourable to the hierarchy. In every part of England there were, at this period, pious and intelligent men, many of them educated at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, who could not conform to the church of England. They were known as puritans and "inconformitans" only. But while the majority were favourable to presbyterianism, many of them were, undoubtedly, favourable to Congregational Indepen-

* Hist. of the Puritans, i 540.

dency. The Brownists had never died out in England,* and the rigid puritans had perpetuated their principles far beyond the range of Jacob's influence, whose church still existed in London. Moreover, the intercourse with Holland and New England kept alive the agitation of church questions, and led many of the most thoughtful minds of the day to embrace the views of the Independents. The parties now referred to, both presbyterians and congregationalists, were evangelical in doctrine, and deeply concerned to diffuse the gospel, without conforming to the church. They accomplished their object by becoming chaplains in the families of the noble or wealthy, and by lecturing in the parish churches. The enormous wealth of the members of the House of Commons, lately dissolved, may serve to show how many families there were in the kingdom that could afford to maintain private chaplains; and the high religious and intellectual character of some of those families, evinced in the history of these times, affords equal proof of the beneficial results attending the system. In many instances, however, the addition of a lectureship to a chaplaincy was felt to be advantageous. The maintenance was thereby improved, and the usefulness of the minister extended. It was becoming a somewhat

* See the sermons of the period in proof. For example, "A Coal from the Altar, &c., by Sam. Ward, B. D., of Ipswich, 1622," p. 79. "As for our Sundaies church-service, which is all that God gets at our hands, how perfunctorily, and fashionably is it slubbered over; how are his Saboths made the voyder and dunghill for all refuse businesse, divided between the church and the ale-house, the Maypole commonly beguiling the pulpit! This want of devotion makes the foule-mouthed papists to spet at us: *this want of reformation makes the queasi-stomached Brownists cast themselves out of the church.*"

common thing for a man of piety and learning to seek out such a mode of life as was thus provided for; and some of the most zealous and popular preachers of the day were those who had leisure, in the bosom of godly families, to prepare the sermon for the Sunday afternoon. The care of the parish and the reading of the common prayer generally devolved upon the parochial clergyman, who, in too many instances, was willing to obtain assistance to any extent and on the easiest terms. Thus there was little obligation on the part of the lecturer; and his position was as favourable as possible for the formation of an independent opinion on matters of theology and church government. Neither was there much scrupulousness on the part of the parochial clergy generally, in respect to the mode in which the lecturer acquitted himself, so long as he was acceptable with the parish. Some, therefore, found themselves at liberty to preach the gospel with as much freedom as if they had been living in better times, and dispensed with the attire prescribed by the rubric, in favour of the Geneva cloak, without fear of rebuke.*

This state of things could not escape the observation of Laud. He detected the kind of influence attached to it, in relation not only to the people who flocked to hear the popular preacher, but also to the class of men for whom a provision was thereby secured. He was keen enough to perceive that puritanism had its strong-hold in this extra-parochial and extra-hierarchical system. He deter-

* Heylin (Life of Laud, p. 198) complains of the "multitude of irregular lecturers, both in city and country, whose work it was to undermine as well the doctrine as the government of the church."

mined, therefore, to give it a death-blow. This was attempted in the following manner. Conjointly with Harsnet, Archbishop of York, he induced the king to issue certain "Instructions to the most Reverend Father in God, George, Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, containing certain orders to be observed and put in execution by the several bishops in his province."* These instructions were, in part, to the following effect:—

1. That in all parishes the afternoon sermons be turned into catechizing by question and answer, where there is not some great cause to break this ancient and profitable order.

2. That every lecturer read Divine service before lecture in his surplice and hood.

3. That where there are lectures in market towns, they be read by grave and orthodox divines, residing in the same diocese; and that they preach in gowns and not in cloaks, as too many do use.

4. That no lecturer, though appointed by a corporation, be permitted to preach, that is not ready and willing to take upon him a living with cure of souls.

5. That the bishops take order, that the sermons of the lecturers be observed.

6. That none under noblemen and men qualified by law, keep a private chaplain.

7. That care be taken, that the prayers and catechizings be frequented, as well as sermons.

These instructions were necessarily forwarded to the bishops, and an annual return was required. Archbishop Abbot was reluctant to enforce the man-

* In the same mandate the bishops were cautioned against "wasting the woods" on their episcopal domains, with the significant addition, "where any are left!"

date, and even ventured to restore some who had been suspended by its operation; and the bishops generally were tardy in their compliance, on account of the disaffection it was likely to produce, and the other matters mixed up with it bearing hard as they thought upon themselves.* But Laud and the court bishops acted upon it immediately, and with all strictness. Many lecturers were suspended, and not a few of the more regular ministers were deprived.† The puritan and independent party remonstrated in vain. The reign of persecution had again set in. Resolved to do "his duty," Laud was unrelenting, and in the prosecution of his "holy purposes" overlooked every humane consideration.‡

In connexion with the system of lecturing, another and supplementary plan, for providing evangelical and zealous lecturers, had for some years been followed by the leaders of the puritan party. So far back as the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, the puritans had complained that the tithes which should have gone to the maintenance of a godly clergy, were in many instances paid to laymen for no service whatever, under the name of "lay impropriations;" and they had petitioned that a "seventh part" of these

* Heylin's Life of Laud, p. 201.

† Neal mentions the name of some of the principal (i. 541).

‡ Heylin, p. 202. Hume's Hist. of England, An. 1630. The two phrases quoted in the text are from the above-mentioned authors respectively. The continuator of Mackintosh's Hist. of England, besides being inaccurate, seems to have lost scent here. Hobbes, Hume, and Clarendon, appear to be his choice authorities for the puritan character. Alas, for the historian who has no principles—or the wrong ones. See Carlyle's Cromwell, vol. i. p. 11—15, for something better.

tithes, at least, might be devoted to the support of ministers in districts that were destitute of spiritual instruction. The petition having been refused, in the course of time it occurred to some of the puritan leaders that, by the purchase of these lay impropriations, they might attain their object without any interference with the supposed rights of the laymen in whose hands they then were. Dr. Preston, a "famous man" in those days, Dr. Gouge, Dr. Sibbs, and Dr. Offspring, together with some wealthy merchants, chiefly in London, took the matter up with spirit, and funds of large and increasing extent were subscribed for the purpose. The consequence was, that many parts of the country were supplied with devoted and enterprizing ministers, whose labours were universally acceptable, and in many instances highly successful.* The scheme, however, was looked upon by the court clergy as irregular, and inimical to their despotic aims; and proceedings which pended for some years, were instituted against the trustees, at the instigation of Laud. Although the law finally declared against them, the plan was too popular to be entirely given up.† Cromwell's letter to Mr. Storie is not only a proof of this, but expresses the sentiments of those who embarked in this laudable enterprise. "Building of hos-

* The market-towns were chiefly selected for these Home Missionary labours. The parties to whose care the funds were entrusted were termed *feoffees*.

† Dr. Price says (Hist. of Nonconformity, ii. 60), "The design of the feoffees, however excellent and Christian-like, was uncanonical and alarming." We prefer Carlyle's view of the matter: "How would the public take it now, if,—we say not the gate of heaven, but the gate of the opposition hustings were suddenly shut against mankind,—if our opposition newspapers, and their morning prophesyings were suppressed!" Letters and Speeches, i. 70.

pitals," writes this remarkable man, in 1635, "provides for men's bodies; to build material temples is judged a work of piety; but they that procure spiritual food, they that build up spiritual temples, they are the men truly charitable, truly pious. Such a work as this was your erecting the Lecture in our country; in the which you placed Dr. Wells, a man of goodness and industry, and ability to do good every way; not short of any I know in England: and I am persuaded that, since his coming, the Lord hath by him wrought much good among us. It only remains now that He who first moved you to this, put you forward in the continuance thereof: it was the Lord; and therefore to him lift we up our hearts that he would perfect it. And surely, Mr. Storie, it were a piteous thing to see a Lecture fall, in the hands of so many able and godly men, as I am persuaded the founders of this are; in these times, wherein we see they are suppressed, with too much haste and violence, by the enemies of God's truth." *

It was becoming more and more evident every day, that the difference between the puritan and the court clergy was not one of mere form and ceremony, as some superficial historians have asserted, but involved matters of the highest moment. The spiritual heroes of that day staked their all upon the belief and maintenance of Christ's gospel, as it lay before them in the written Word. It was to them a revelation from heaven, which no earthly considerations might set aside or impair. Hence, however willing to concede to the utmost in things indifferent, they were immoveable in respect to every point which they considered settled by the Word of God; and the

* Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, i. 116, 117.

more popish the forms introduced by the court clergy, and the more severe the measures adopted by Laud against the nonconformists, the more firmly were they banded together in stern resistance. The battle was between life and death. Those who affect to lead the popular mind in the present day affirm, that the "complaint" of these men was "greatly, if not irrationally, disproportionate to the provocation," and sneer at the "sacrifices" endured in order to maintain the consistency and spirituality of a religion held so dear. They represent the controversy as a trifling one, namely, whether Divine service should be "read by a minister with or without a surplice," and whether a sermon should be "preached by one in a short cloak or a gown."* Such views, however, are happily on the wane, and as the spirit of puritanism revives in this country and elsewhere, will gradually die out. The kind of religion Laud and his party were endeavouring to establish and extend, may be seen in the following specimen, offered on occasion

* Mackintosh's England, continuation, vol. v. pp. 138, 139. In seeing Mackintosh's name attached to this history—continuation and all—who does not feel the injustice of the association! He would have better appreciated the puritan heroism. "For indisputably," writes Thomas Carlyle, "this too was a heroism; and the soul of it remains part of the eternal soul of things! Here, of our own land and lineage, in practical English shape, were heroes on the earth once more. Who knew in every fibre, and with heroic daring laid to heart, that an Almighty Justice does verily rule this world; that it is good to fight on God's side, and bad to fight on the devil's side. Perhaps it was among the nobler and noblest human heroisms, this puritanism of ours: but English Dryasdust (that is, Mackintosh's Continuator, and others of like stamp) could not discern it for a heroism at all." Oliver Cromwell's Letters and Speeches, i. 14.

of the consecration of St. Catherine Creed Church, in the city of London.

"On Sunday, January 16, 1630, Bishop Laud came thither about nine in the morning, attended with several of the High Commission, and some civilians. At his approach to the west door of the church, which was shut, and guarded by habaldeers, some who were appointed for that purpose, cried with a loud voice: *Open, open, ye everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in;* and presently the doors being opened, the bishop, with some doctors and principal men, entered. As soon as they were come within the place, his lordship fell down upon his knees, and with eyes lifted up, and his arms spread abroad, said: *This place is holy; the ground is holy. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, I pronounce it holy.* Then walking up the middle aisle towards the *chancel,* he took up some of the dust, and threw it into the air several times. When he approached near the rail of the communion table, he bowed towards it five or six times, and returning, went round the church with his attendants in procession, saying first the hundredth, and then the nineteenth psalm, as prescribed in the *Roman pontificate.* He then read several collects, in one of which he *prays God to accept of that beautiful building,* and concludes thus: *We consecrate this church, and separate it unto thee as holy ground, not to be profaned any more to common use.* In another he prays, *that all that should hereafter be buried within the circuit of this holy and sacred place, may rest in their sepulchres in peace till Christ's coming to judgment, and may then rise to eternal life and happiness.* After this, the bishop, sitting under a cloth of state in the aisle of the chancel, near the communion table, took a

written book in his hand, and pronounced curses upon those who should thereafter profane that holy place by musters of soldiers, or keeping profane law courts, or carrying burdens through it; and at the end of every curse he bowed to the east, and said, *Let all the people say, Amen.* When the curses were ended, which were about twenty, he pronounced a like number of blessings upon all who had any hand in framing and building of that sacred and beautiful edifice, and on those who had given, or should hereafter give, any chalice, plate, ornaments, or other utensils; and at the end of every blessing he bowed to the east, and said, *Let all the people say, Amen.* After this followed the sermon, and then the sacrament, which the bishop consecrated and administered after the following manner: —

"As he approached the altar, he made five or six low bows, and coming up to the side of it, where the bread and wine were covered, he bowed seven times; then, after reading many prayers, he came near the bread, and gently lifting up the corner of the napkin, beheld it, and immediately letting fall the napkin, retreated hastily a step or two, and made three low obeisances. His lordship then advanced, and having uncovered the bread, bowed three times as before; then laid his hand on the cup, which was full of wine, with the cover upon it; which having let go he stepped back, and bowed three times towards it; then came near again, and lifting up the cover of the cup, looked into it, and seeing the wine, he let fall the cover again, retired back, and bowed as before; after which the elements were consecrated, and the bishop having first received, gave it to some principal men in their surplices, hoods, and tippets; towards

the conclusion, many prayers being said, the solemnity of the consecration ended." *

Similar ceremonies were performed at the consecration of St. Giles's and other churches: and so essential were they deemed, that many were re-consecrated after this pattern, although some of them had been used as parish churches for more than half a century. Besides this, the Bishop of London procured a proclamation commanding the archbishops to take special care that the parish churches in their several dioceses were kept in decent repair, and to make use of the powers of the ecclesiastical courts to compel reluctant parishioners to a liberal performance of their duty. What was intended by "decent repairs" is evident from the pattern set by Laud and a few others, in the decorations, paintings, carvings, altars, and so forth, introduced into the cathedral and other churches at this period.

It would be tedious to enter into any detail of the "fopperies," as Bishop Kennet terms them, that were now forced upon unwilling parishes; neither would the patient people have been exasperated by these things, had they not been otherwise molested in the worship of God and in the propagation of his religion. They had endured much already, and were prepared to endure more. But this offensive protruding of popish ceremonies into their worship was only one half of the grievance: there was no toleration for those who, because they loathed them, sought other means of complying with the dictates of conscience. In the early part of this reign Laud had given the baptists a taste of his cruelty, in the imprisonment of some of their most popular

* Neal, i. 549, 550. This form of consecration was borrowed from Bishop Andrews.

ministers, who still remained in jail.* The church formed by Jacob, also, had been compelled to hold its meetings as secretly as possible, moving from one place to another as caution dictated; and on venturing to act with less discretion than usual, was persecuted by Laud, in 1632. About sixty of its members had assembled on the 29th of April in the house of Mr. Humphrey Barnet, a brewer's clerk, at Blackfriars. Mr. John Lathorp, who had succeeded Jacob as pastor, was with them; and in the midst of their worship, a party of officers, headed by Tomlinson the bishop's pursuivant, broke in upon them. A few escaped in the confusion; but forty-two were apprehended, their pastor being one. They were all committed to prison, some in the Clink, some in the New Prison, and some in the Gatehouse; and in prison they all remained for two tedious years. At the expiration of that term, they were released on bail, with the exception of Mr. Lathorp, who was refused bail. He afterwards petitioned the king for liberty to depart the kingdom, and on obtaining permission went to New England, accompanied by about thirty of his congregation.†

* Brewer, Fenner, and Turner, are the names of the parties referred to. How long the last two remained in prison cannot be determined. Brewer was brought before the High Commission in 1626; some time after, "slipt out of prison;" was captured and committed to prison again; and remained in prison from that period to the time of the Long Parliament. Brook's Lives of the Puritans, ii. 444; Price's History of Nonconformity, ii. 53, 54.

† According to Crosby, (Hist. of English Baptists, i. 148) Lathorp's church was divided by a baptist movement, while he was in prison, which terminated in a secession and the formation of a baptist church in 1633. The residuary church renewed their covenant after this diminution, and are spoken of as being "so steady to their vows, that hardly an instance can be produced of one that deserted to the church by the severest persecutions." Neal, i. 663.

Besides these, multitudes were persecuted for various offences, and in various degrees. Conformist or non-conformist, churchman or puritan, it was all the same to the court bishops. Wherever implicit obedience was not yielded to their authority, punishment immediately followed. Some were called to account for preaching against popery; others, for preaching against Arminianism and idle ceremonies; and others, even bishops, though of inferior degree, for "touching upon the point of predestination."* Some were deprived by the High Commission, without any specific charge brought against them; some were fined heavily for taking glass windows, stained with monstrous pictures, out of their parish churches, and substituting others of a more becoming kind; some were robbed, imprisoned, deprived, whipped, kept to hard labour as felons, and fed on starving diet, for preaching against decorations and images in churches.†

The worst case, however, that comes into notice during the present period is that of Dr. Alexander Leighton, a Scotch divine, and father of the celebrated archbishop of that name. In October, 1828, he had printed, it could scarcely be said published, a book entitled, "An Appeal to the Parliament: or, Sion's Plea against the Prelacy; the sum whereof is delivered in a Decade of Positions, in the handling whereof, the Lord Bishops and their appurtenances are manifestly proved both by Divine and human laws, to be Intruders upon the privileges of Christ, of the King,

* Dr. Davenant, bishop of Salisbury, for example. Neal, i. 546, 547.

† See the cases of Crowder, Sherfield, Hayden, and others, in Neal, i. 554—558.

and of the Common-weal; and therefore, upon good evidence given, she heartily desireth a Judgment and Execution." The title is sufficiently significant of the aim of the writer. The work, however, had been printed for the use of the parliament only, and when Leighton ascertained that it had been dissolved before his work was ready to be put into the hands of the members, he suppressed the copies he had procured to be printed in Holland. Notwithstanding this precaution, a copy found its way to some members of the government, who immediately instituted proceedings against him. On a warrant from the High Commission he was seized, loaded with irons, thrust into a loathsome dungeon in Newgate, and after confinement for fifteen weeks, arraigned in the Star Chamber, on the 4th of June, 1630. The charge against him, was for "framing, publishing, and scattering, a scandalous book against king, peers and prelates." The charge was true, because the statements made in the book were scandalously true. He wrote of the prelates and of the hierarchy as he and others had found them. His words were not courteous; but neither the prelates, nor the hierarchy had been over courteous towards those who had differed from them. His figures were not the most choice; but they were much less objectionable than the actions of those against whom his book was written.* And if his crime was heinous, in venturing to cry out against

* He called the bishops, "men of blood;" the queen "a daughter of Heth;" and referring to the hierarchy he used a strong figure, "smite that Hazael under the fifth rib;"—which Heylin and Lawson, with the ingenuity of special pleaders, have interpreted literally as an incentive to assassination, and construed into a justification of all that was, without a figure, done to poor Leighton.

the intolerable evils under which liberty and religion groaned, it must be admitted that his punishment was more than proportionably severe, as the following statement, furnished by a contemporary writer, will evince.

"On the 26th of November, 1630," says Ludlow, "this censure was executed in a most cruel manner. His ears were cut, his nose slit, his face branded with burning irons;* he was tied to a post, and whipped with a treble cord to that cruel degree, that he, himself, writing the history thereof, ten years after, affirmed that every lash brought away the flesh, and that he should feel it to his dying day. He was lastly put in the pillory, and kept there nearly two hours in frost and snow; and then after this most barbarous usage, not permitted to return to his quarters in the Fleet in a coach provided to carry him, but compelled in that sad condition and severe weather, to go by water. After this he was kept ten weeks in dirt and mire, not being sheltered from rain and snow. They shut him up most closely twenty-two months; and he remained a prisoner ten or eleven years, not suffered to breathe in the open air, until the parliament of 1640 most happily delivered him."†

In consequence of these severities—which became more general as the king became more arbitrary, until it grew into a kind of fashion among the bishops to

* According to the sentence, he was to be "branded in the face with a double S.S., for a *sower of sedition.*"

† Ludlow's Letters (1812) p. 45. The same authority states, that when sentence—the sentence thus executed—was pronounced on Leighton, "Laud pulled off his cap, and, holding up his hands, gave thanks to God who had given him victory over his enemies."

persecute—great numbers left the kingdom for other lands.* Some fled to Holland; but the greater number to New England, where great success had attended the persevering industry of the early settlers. Since the May-flower's first voyage with the pilgrims from Leyden and England, many had gone over in successive emigrations; and intelligence had been received from time to time of the prosperity and peace of the infant colony†. On this account many were prepared to leave their native land, and embark their all in similar enterprizes. It so happened that in 1620, king James had signed a patent of incorporation in favour of the Duke of Lenox, the Marquisses of Buckingham and Hamilton, the Earls of Arundel and Warwick, Sir Francis Gorges, with thirty-four others, and their successors, by which they were constituted "The Council established at Plymouth, in the county of Devon, for the planting, ruling, ordering, and governing of New England in America." This patent became the civil basis of all the grants and patents by which New England was afterwards colonized; and

* Respecting this state of things, Milton writes in 1641:—"Let the astrologer be dismayed at the portentous blaze of comets, and impressions in the air, as foretelling troubles and changes to states: I shall believe there cannot be a more ill-boding sign to a nation, (God turn the omen from us!) than when the inhabitants, to avoid insufferable grievances at home, are enforced by heaps to forsake their native country." Of Reformation, &c.

† In 1622, was published in London, a "Relation or Journall" of the beginnings of the "Plimouth" plantation; and in 1624, "Good Newes from New England," containing the after history. Other accounts were published in successive years, mentioning the names of the ships, and sometimes of the passengers that arrived there. The remainder of the Leyden church got safely over.

the council retained and exercised the power thus vested in them by the crown, until 1635, when they resigned their charter. In 1628, the council sold to Sir Henry Roswell and five others, a large tract of land lying round Massachussets' Bay; and a company was formed for the purpose of colonizing that part of New England. The scheme was entered upon by parties anxious to escape persecution. No plans were laid down adapted to regulate the future proceedings of the colony, in reference to ecclesiastical matters. Probably it was thought prudent to conduct their movement as quietly as possible, lest they might be prevented from accomplishing their object; and as all the parties desiring to emigrate were such as suffered from intolerance at home, it would be thought needless to make any specific arrangements respecting the kind of church polity that should be ultimately adopted.

They sought, therefore, in the first instance, a charter of incorporation from the crown, which was granted in 1629. Captain John Endicott had already gone over in the preceding June, with his family and a small body of emigrants.* In the following May, about three hundred and fifty sailed from the Isle of Wight, and conveyed instructions from the London company appointing Endicott governor, and twelve others members of the council. Two of the persons nominated as councillors were silenced ministers, one a Mr. Higginson of Leicester, and the other a Mr. Skelton of Lincolnshire. One of the first things attended to in the new colony related to their ecclesiastical polity, respecting which various accounts have been given. As this is a matter of some importance

* Morse, p. 29.

in relation to our history, we shall enter somewhat fully into particulars.

According to Winterbotham, these colonists, and those who followed them soon after, were "episcopally inclined when they left England, though they could not conform to many ceremonies and customs, nor submit, to what they judged, different corruptions, imposed upon their consciences by the king and prelates."* According to Dr. Price, they "belonged to the more moderate class of nonconformists, who, without seceding from the communion of the hierarchy, acknowledged its corruptions, and earnestly sought its reform."† Neal has little to say of them, except that they were "all puritans."‡ It appears, however, most probable, that they were chiefly of the class termed "rigid puritans," or, Congregational Independents; since they not only followed the Congregational polity at Salem, as soon as they settled there; but followed it as involving principles they had long recognized as scriptural and good.|| According to the common account respecting them, they must be supposed to have been—all of them—won over to the principles of the New Plymouth Independents, so soon as they came into their neighbourhood. But this is not at all likely; and if we suppose it possible that Higginson and Skelton were capable of so easy a conversion from episcopalian or presbyterian principles to those of Congregational Independency, it is not probable that those who went over with them, and

* Historical view of the United States, i. 28.

† History of Nonconformity, i. 62.

‡ History of the Puritans, i. 543.

|| In these and the following remarks, we refer to the great majority: of course there were exceptions, as in all similar cases.

those who followed after, in number amounting to many hundreds, would have been like them in this respect. We must, in order to make out a case of this nature, suppose either that the colonists went from England without any principles, in an age remarkable for ecclesiastical controversy; or that going out as episcopalians or presbyterians, they were on their first intercourse with the christians of New Plymouth converted to their views. Both suppositions appear quite improbable. More marvellous still is the explanation of Winterbotham: that Dr. Fuller, the physician who attended upon the settlers on their arrival, and who had been sent for from New Plymouth for the purpose, was the instrument of effecting such a change in their ecclesiastical principles.* As we have had occasion to observe before, the term puritan has misled our more modern students of history, in reference to the true character of some of the parties of this period; and in particular of the emigrants to Massachussets. In all likelihood, these emigrants were guided by prudential considerations in keeping their real principles somewhat secret, until they had reached a free country; and the well known difference between the rigid puritans and the separatists of Holland, exaggerated by the false reports of the views of the latter that were continually making their way into England, fully accounts for the prejudice which these parties entertained against the settlers at New Plymouth, until they came to ascertain the identity of their principles and faith with their own.

This view of the subject is confirmed by the state-

* About eighty died in the course of the first winter.

ments of various contemporaries, connected either with the Salem or New Plymouth settlements. Captain Endicott, for example, writing to Governor Bradford, in a letter from Salem, dated May 11th, 1629, says, "I acknowledge myself much bound to you for your kind love and care in sending Mr. Fuller amongst us; and rejoice much that I am by him satisfied touching your judgment of the outward form of God's worship. It is, as far as I can yet gather, no other than is warranted by the evidence of truth, and *the same which I have professed and maintained ever since the Lord in mercy revealed himself unto me;* being far differing from the common report that hath been spread of you, touching that particular."*

Cotton, also, who had much to do with the movement, and who went over in 1633, bears similar testimony. "The dissuader," he says, "is much mistaken when he saith, 'The congregation of Plymouth did incontinently leaven all the vicinity;' seeing, for many years, there was no vicinity to be leavened. And Salem, itself, that was gathered into church order seven or eight years after them, was above forty miles distant from them. And though it be very likely that some of the first comers *might help their theory by hearing and discerning their practice* at Plymouth, yet therein the Scripture is fulfilled, 'The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till all was leavened.' "†

* Young's Chronicles, p. 386.

† Cotton's Way of the Congregational Churches, &c., p. 16. Cotton, it appears, advised those who emigrated from the neighbourhood of Hampton to consult "them at Plymouth," and "do nothing to offend them."

In addition to the above, the statement of Edward Winslow in his "Brief Narration" is worthy of being recorded, respecting the manner in which these noble-minded colonists laid the foundations of their religious polity. Accounting for the fact that the Congregational system prevailed everywhere in New England, he says, "And for the many plantations that came over to us upon notice of God's blessing upon us, whereas 'tis falsely said they took Plymouth for their precedent, as fast as they came; 'tis true, I confess, that some of the chief of them advised with us, (coming over to be freed from the burthensome ceremonies then imposed in England) how they should do to fall upon a right platform of worship, and desired to that end, since God had honoured us to lay the foundation of a commonwealth, and to settle a church in it, to show them whereupon our practice was grounded; and if they found, upon due search, it was built upon the Word, they should be willing to take up what was of God. We accordingly showed them the primitive practice for our warrant, taken out of the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles written to the several churches by the said Apostles, together with the commandments of Christ the Lord, in the Gospel, and other our warrants for every particular we did from the Book of God. Which being by them well weighed and considered, they also entered into covenant with God and one another, to walk in all his ways, revealed, or as they should be made known unto them, and to worship him according to his will revealed in his written Word only, etc. So that here also thou mayest see, they set not the church at Plymouth before them for example, but the primitive churches were and are

their and our mutual patterns and examples, which are only worthy to be followed, having the blessed Apostles amongst them, who were sent immediately by Christ himself, and enabled and guided by the unerring Spirit of God. And truly this is a pattern fit to be followed of all that fear God, and no man or men to be followed further than they follow Christ and them." *

The fact elicited by these statements, considered in connexion with what has been advanced in the preceding pages, throws much light upon the actual condition of the so-called puritan mind of England at this period. Both within and without the church by law established, there were many whose views approximated more or less nearly to those of the Independents of a later period, and of modern times. Their chief defect related to the connexion between the spiritual and the civil power; but, generally speaking, they saw clearly that what Bishop Hall termed "Independent Congregations" was the binding order of a scriptural polity. Hence, when they came to hold intercourse with the Christian settlers of New Plymouth, both parties found themselves one in all that was essential to church order, fellowship, and worship. A church was formed at Salem on the 6th of August, 1629, in the presence of the representatives of the church at Plymouth. when a covenant was signed by about thirty persons desirous of uniting in church fellowship. The terms of this covenant were similar to those employed by Jacob's church on a previous occasion, and are such as could not have been used by parties holding

* Young's Chronicles, pp. 386, 387.

episcopalian or presbyterian opinions.* It was as follows:—

"We covenant with our Lord and one with another. We bind ourselves, in the presence of God, to walk together in all his ways, according as he is pleased to reveal himself to us in his blessed Word of Truth, and do profess to walk as follows, through the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"We avouch the Lord to be our God, and ourselves to be his people, in the truth and simplicity of our spirits.

"We give ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to the word of his grace, for the teaching, ruling, and sanctifying us, in matters of worship and conversation, resolving to reject all canons and constitutions of men in worship.

"We promise to walk with our brethren with all watchfulness and tenderness, avoiding jealousies, suspicions, backbitings, censurings, provokings, secret risings of spirit against them; but in all offences to follow the rule of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to bear and forbear, give and forgive, as he hath taught us.

"In publick or in private we will willingly do nothing to the offence of the church; but will be willing to take advice for ourselves and ours, as occasion shall be presented.

"We will not in the congregation be forward, either to show our own gifts and parts, in speaking, or scrupling, or discovering the weaknesses or failings of our brethren; but attend an ordinary call thereunto,

* They chose a pastor, a ruling elder, and a teacher, or as Smyth would have termed it, a "triformed presbytery." But this did not constitute them presbyterians; being intra-congregational and subject to the church. See back, p. 26.

knowing how much the Lord may be dishonoured, and his gospel and the profession of it slighted, by our distempers and weaknesses in publick.

"We bind ourselves to study the advancement of the gospel in all truth and peace, both in regard of those that are within or without, no way slighting our sister churches, but using their counsel as need shall be; not laying a stumbling-block before any, no, not the *Indians*, whose good we desire to promote, and so to converse, as we may avoid the very appearance of evil.

"We do hereby promise to carry ourselves in all lawful obedience to those who are over us, in church or commonwealth, knowing how well-pleasing it will be to the Lord, that they should have encouragement in their places, by our not grieving their spirits by our irregularities.

"We resolve to approve ourselves to the Lord in our particular callings, shunning idleness, as the bane of any state; nor will we deal hardly or oppressingly with any, wherein we are the Lord's stewards.

"Promising also, to the best of our ability, to teach our children and servants the knowledge of God and of his will, that they may serve him also. And all this, not by any strength of our own, but by the Lord Jesus Christ, whose blood we desire may sprinkle this our covenant made in his name."*

From this period the congregational system prevailed in the colony. About fifteen hundred emigrants went over in 1630, with Winthrop, the newly appointed governor, at their head; and many others followed in succeeding years, until the jealousy of

* Neal, i. 543, 544.

Laud put a stop to the emigration in this direction, as we shall hereafter have occasion to notice more fully.

Those who went over in 1630 published an address before their departure, "to the rest of their brethren in and of the church of England," from which it has been inferred that they were any thing but Congregationalists at that time. This address was in part as follows:—"We desire you would be pleased to take notice of the principals and body of our company, as those who esteem it our honour to call the church of England, from whence we rise, our dear mother, and cannot part from our native country, where she specially resideth, without much sadness of heart, and many tears in our eyes, ever acknowledging that such hope and part as we have obtained in the common salvation, we have received in her bosom, and sucked it from her breast. We leave it not, therefore, as loathing that milk wherewith we were nourished there, but blessing God for the parentage and education, as members of the same body shall always rejoice in her good, and unfeignedly grieve for any sorrow that shall ever betide her, and, while we have breath, sincerely desire and endeavour the continuance and abundance of her welfare, with the enlargement of her bounds in the kingdom of Christ Jesus; wishing our heads and hearts were fountains of tears for your everlasting welfare, when we shall be in our poor cottages in the wilderness, overshadowed with the spirit of supplication." *

In order to understand such a document as this, it

* Young's Chronicles, p. 398. Neal, i. 545, 546. Price's Hist. of Nonconformity, i. 62, 63.

should be remembered that it was written for "the removal of suspicion, and misconstruction of their intentions." * Neither need there be any doubt that "their professions were heartfelt and sincere," † since their relation to the church of England had in fact been what they described, and their views as rigid puritans had always been connected with affection for the pious ministers and congregations of the church of England.‡ At the same time, it is observable that there is a studied silence respecting their own sufferings for conscience' sake, and respecting the bishops and their doings. They went, probably, as far as they could in the expression of their kindly feelings towards the church, without committing themselves one way or another concerning their private views. Before this, Higginson had expressed the same feelings, only more strongly. "We will not say,"—he exclaimed, in 1629, when taking his last look of his native land, from the stern of the ship that conveyed him to New England,—"We will not say, as the separatists were wont to say at their leaving of England, Farewell, Babylon! Farewell, Rome! but we will say, Farewell, dear England! Farewell, the church of God in England, and all the Christian friends there. We do not go to New England as separatists from the church of England."§ The fact that all these parties, on their arrival at Salem, adopted the ecclesiastical discipline of those whom they deprecated as separatists, only proves that they had been misinformed

* Neal, i. 545.

† Young's Chronicles, p. 398.

‡ The rigid puritans, though Congregational Independents, had always deprecated the idea of being thought separatists.

§ Young's Chronicles, p. 398.

respecting the character and principles of the separatists, a circumstance easily to be accounted for from their practical connexion with the church of England, in an age of calumny and intolerance. Some years back, John Robinson had been sagacious enough to perceive the identity of his views with those of most of the nonconforming clergy who had not separated from the church of England; and he had expressed his conviction that this identity would be at once confessed by the clergy themselves as soon as they were dissociated from that church. "There will be no difference," said he, in 1620, in his address to the pilgrims of Leyden, "between the unconformable ministers and you, when they come to the practice of the ordinances out of the kingdom."* So that, on the review of the whole matter, we cannot fail to perceive how widely the scriptural views of the Brownists, and their successors of various names, had become disseminated in England, even in the bosom of the establishment, at this time. The Independent party of a later period did not, as some have supposed, spring up in a day, taking the world by surprise, both by the novelty of its principles and the new-born might of its great leaders. The formative process had been going on during many long years of trial. The blood of the martyrs in Elizabeth's reign, the labours and controversies of the exiles in James's, and the successes of the colonists in Charles's, led to those results which have perplexed the minds of the annalists, and at which the world even yet sometimes seems astonished.

* Winslow's Brief Narration, in Young's Chronicles, p. 398. Also see back, pp. 70, 71.

In 1633, at the instigation of Laud, king Charles made an unsuccessful attempt to subjugate the church of Scotland to an episcopalian discipline. Rejecting the lessons of experience which his father's previous failure should have taught him, he determined to try what authority and power could do in this respect. He therefore made a royal progress into that country, attended by a large retinue of noblemen and churchmen. On the 18th of June, he was crowned at Edinburgh, and on the 20th, he met the Scotch parliament of Lords and Commons, whom he treated with as little ceremony as the purpose of his visit required. Two acts were proposed for their adoption, one relating to his prerogative and the apparel of kirkmen, the other to former acts touching religion, which were to be ratified. When the first bill was put, his majesty, fearing the character of the vote that might be rendered, took a paper out of his pocket, containing a list of the members, and said, "Gentlemen, I have all your names here, and I will know who will do me service, this day, and who will not." When the vote was taken, the majority appeared against the bill; but the clerk, making a false report, reversed the decision, and declared that it was carried in the affirmative. The indignant expression which marked the countenances of some of the members, and the outspoken denial of the truth of the clerk's declaration on the part of others, were alike in vain. The king would have it so. The royal insult, however, alienated not only the parliament, but all ranks of Scottish subjects. In eight days the parliament was dissolved; and on the 1st of July, Charles left Edinburgh for London, where he arrived on the 20th. This visit to his native land was as mischievous as it was brief, and

was followed by measures of the most impolitic nature. Before the king's departure, a new bishopric had been instituted at Edinburgh, through the influence of Laud, who had availed himself of every opportunity of affronting the presbyters of the kirk;* and now it was determined, if possible, to introduce the English liturgy, together with all the ceremonies so fashionable at court. Articles, framed for this purpose, were sent into Scotland, under the royal hand, with the declaration that they were intended, in the first instance, for the chapel royal, but also as a pattern for all the cathedrals, chapels, and parish churches, of the kingdom. Instead, however, of surrendering themselves to these innovations, the Scotch people from the beginning resisted, and when the proper time came, rose up against it "as one man." †

Soon after Charles's return from Scotland, or on the 4th of August, Archbishop Abbot died, and Laud was almost immediately appointed to the vacant office. The consequences attending this promotion we reserve for another chapter, and conclude this with a few particulars respecting an individual whose name has already been mentioned, and who died about this period.‡

Dr. William Ames was a Congregational Independent, and had great influence over his contemporaries,

* At the king's coronation, when Lindsey, the Archbishop of Glasgow, appeared at the king's side in simple attire, Laud thrust him aside in a rude manner, saying, "What! are you a churchman, and want the coat of your order?" and another bishop, more after Laud's fashion, was called to officiate in his place. Rushwork, ii. 182.

† Neal, i. 563.

‡ Notwithstanding his European celebrity, Ames is not once mentioned in Hallam's Introduction to the Literature of Europe.

both in the church of England and amongst the separatists. He was descended from an ancient family in Norfolk, where he was born in 1576. He was educated at Christ Church, Cambridge, and derived great advantages from the counsels of the celebrated Perkins,* by whom he was instructed in the evangelical doctrines of the New Testament. From an early period, he was distinguished by his zealous maintenance of those doctrines, his great assiduity as a scholar, his purity of life, and his enmity to the corruptions of the Romish system. In his thirty-fifth year, he was compelled to leave Cambridge in consequence of his public remonstrance against the immoral and frivolous practices of that university, in a sermon delivered at St Mary's. Had he been a great churchman, the offence might have been overlooked; but being known as a puritan in many of his sentiments, it was unpardonable. In order, therefore, to prevent his expulsion by the Master, who acted in concurrence with Archbishop Bancroft, he forsook the college, went to Holland, and became minister of the English church at the Hague.

He had not been long at the Hague, before he received an invitation from the States of Friesland to occupy the professor's chair in the university of Franeker. He was already known as a scholar and writer,† and his reputation gave Franeker a celebrity

* Ames always classes Perkins with Calvin, and other great writers.

† In conjunction with Bradshaw, he had published his sentiments respecting the separatists. In 1608, he had written the preface to Bradshaw's "Unreasonableness of the Separation;" and in 1610, he had translated Bradshaw's "English Puritanism," into Latin. The last-mentioned work was re-published in 1641, in Ames's name. Brook's Lives of the Puritans, ii. 408.

it had never possessed before. Many went from Hungary, Poland, Prussia, and Flanders, to receive the benefit of his instructions, who, according to the testimony of one of their number, "would not have stayed there but for the liking they had of him." * During this period of his life, he had many opportunities of intercourse with Robinson, with whom he had previously become acquainted. At one time they had been opposed to one another; but now there was "much loving agreement between them." They were men of kindred spirit, and much alike in temper. Ames was superior to Robinson as a scholar, and in metaphysical acumen; but was not equal to him in his knowledge of men and manners. Robinson laid more stress than Ames on matters of church government; and Ames was more successful than Robinson in setting forth the cardinal doctrines of Calvinism in a succinct and transparently logical form. Neither of them were prolix writers; but Ames was of the two the most elegantly sententious and consecutive in his style. Both were gifted with considerable power of analysis; but Ames was, probably, the keenest disputant. Robinson received the thanks of the clergy and learned men of Leyden for his triumphant discussion with Episcopius; Ames secured the approbation of some of the choicest minds of Europe for his two treatises in opposition to Grevinchovius, and his confutation of the Dutch Arminians.†

* Biographia Evangelica, iv. 47.

† The "Disceptatio Scholastica," and the "Disputatio," the former of which was published in 1613, and the latter in 1615, were written in reply to Grevinchovius of Rotterdam. The "Coronis ad Collationem Hagiensem, &c.," is a vindication of the arguments of the Dutch pastors against the remonstrants, or Armi-

Both were eminent men; but, as it appears to us, the one was better fitted for the duties of the pastor, and the other for the chair of the evangelical professor.

The writings of Ames prove that he was a profound theologian, a careful expositor of Scripture, and a learned casuist. The chief of them were published during his professorship at Francker.* During the same period, also, he was summoned to act as one of the synod of Dort,† and, it is reported, furnished the English ambassador with notes of the respective arguments advanced on both sides. But his constitution proved too feeble for his arduous duties, and after twelve years of eminent service, he resigned his professorship. Moreover, the air of Franeker was thought to be too keen for him, and he was therefore advised to remove to a more congenial neighbourhood. Besides this, he was very anxious to resume the office of pastor and preacher, which he had of necessity relinquished some years before. He, therefore, accepted the invitation of the English congregation at Rotterdam to become their co-pastor with Hugh Peters, and went to reside in that town. Here, also, his health failed him, and he determined if possible to leave Holland for New England. But, like Robinson before him, he was not permitted to gratify his desires.

nians, as offered in the synod of Dort. The last is still worthy of being used as a text-book in our colleges.

* Besides those mentioned already, he published during this period his "Medulla Theologica;" notes in English and Latin on both Epistles of Peter, under the title of "Explicatio utriusque Epistolæ S. Petri;" a work against Socinianism, or the "De Incarnatione Verbi;" a work against popery, entitled, "Bellarminus Enervatus;" a very celebrated book on cases of conscience; and some others.

† Coronis, præfatio.

While he was engaged in the composition of his last work, entitled "A Fresh Suit Against Human Ceremonies in God's Worship,"* his health failed, and mortal sickness ensued. He died in the early part of November, 1633.†

The position occupied by Ames in relation to the religious parties of his day, has been variously estimated. At one period we find Robinson regarding him as an antagonist; at a much later period, Canne, who succeeded Ainsworth at Amsterdam, endeavoured to vindicate the separatists from his censures. The explanations we have already given respecting the difference between the separatists and the rigid puritans, will account for this seeming variance. Ames was a Congregational Independent, yet, in theory, against separation from the church of England. He not only agreed with Robinson, in regarding with affection all the godly, and all the congregations of the godly within her pale; he admitted the right of the magistrate to interfere, in some degree, in ecclesiastical matters, and wrote severely against those who gloried in their separation from what they deemed an iniquitous and unscriptural system. Thus he did some injury to the reputation of his fellow-exiles, amongst the conformists and puritan nonconformists; which Canne sought, not

* Thomas Hooker, who assisted Ames between 1630 and 1633, edited and, in part, wrote this work. It was of great service; and is referred to by Baxter as conferring great benefit upon him, when he was beginning to inquire into matters ecclesiastical. Orme's Life of Baxter, i, 23.

† His widow and children went to New England the next spring, taking over with them "his valuable library." Fuller's Cambridge, 222; Neal, i. 579.

without considerable success, to repair.* At the same time he was opposed to the power of synods and classes; and in some of his writings shows that he objected to the temper of the separatists, much more than to their separation. On the whole, his position was one of great eminence, and his death was lamented as a public loss. "Learned Amesius," says Hugh Peters, "breathed his last breath into my bosom, who left his professorship in Friesland to live with me, because of my church's Independency, at Rotterdam. He was my colleague and chosen brother to the church where I was an unworthy pastor."†

"With the coming forth of this book into the light," says Hooker, in his preface to the Fresh Suit, "the learned and famous author, Dr. Ames, left the light, or darkness rather, of this world, ... a pattern of holiness, a burning and shining light, a lamp of learning and arts, a champion of truth." Thus did they speak of him, who knew him best; but the testimony of all his contemporaries is to the same effect.

* Hanbury, i. 515—524, 533. Canne's work is entitled, "A Necessity of Separation from the Church of England proved by the Nonconformists' Principles, specially opposed to Dr. Ames his Fresh Suit against Human Ceremonies, in the point of Separation only; also Dr. Leighton, Mr. Dayrell, and Mr. Bradshaw are here answered, wherein they have written against us." (1634.)

† Ibid., i. 257.

CHAPTER V.

INDEPENDENCY FROM THE DEATH OF ARCHBISHOP ABBOT TO THE LONG PARLIAMENT. 1633—1640.

THE elevation of Laud to the see of Canterbury, was one of those measures which proved either the infatuation of King Charles or the perfect identity of their spirit and aims. The probability of the case is in favour of the latter view; since on Laud's first appearance at court, after the vacancy of Lambeth had been certified, he was saluted by the title of "My Lord's Grace of Canterbury." The question of Abbot's successor had in fact been settled long ago.* It is said, that Rome offered at this particular period to make him a cardinal; an offer which, according to his own statement, he somewhat reluctantly declined. If he had anticipated the issue of the conflict in which he was about to plunge the nation, he might probably have overcome his reluctance, and given a new turn to the course of public affairs.

One of Laud's first steps, after his promotion, was to enforce the provisions of the Book of Sports, notwithstanding the decision of the judges respecting its demoralizing influence on the people. During their Western Circuit in 1631, Richardson, the Lord Chief

* Laud was at this time also Chancellor of Oxford and Dublin Universities, Privy-counsellor for England and Scotland, First Commissioner of the Exchequer, &c.

Justice, and Baron Denham, had, in compliance with the request of the justices of the peace, and with the unanimous consent of the whole bench, made an order for suppressing "revels, church ales, and clerk ales," on the Sunday; and, acting in accordance with precedent, had required every parish minister to read the order in the parish church, twice a year. Their object in thus acting, was to prevent the great excesses and crimes that had been committed in consequence of these religious customs. As soon, however, as the matter came to the knowledge of the archbishop, he cited Richardson before the Council by order of his majesty, charged him with invading the episcopal jurisdiction, reprimanded him in the severest terms, and charged him to reverse the order at the next assizes. The Lord Chief Justice obeyed, but in such a manner as to show that he was unchanged in his opinion. At the ensuing assizes he declared before his brother justices, "that he thought he had done God, the king, and his country good service by that *good* order that he and his brother Denham had made, for suppressing unruly wakes and revels; but that it had been misreported to his majesty, who had expressly charged him to reverse it. Accordingly (says he,) I do, as much as in me lies, reverse it, declaring the same to be null and void, and that all persons may use their recreations at such meetings as before."

The people, it is said, were fond of these recreations, —a point which need not be questioned. The justices of the peace, however, regarded this interference with deep regret, and signed a petition to the king, in which they declare that these revels had led to the profanation of the Lord's day, to riotous tippling, contempt of authority, quarrels, murder,

etc., and were very prejudicial to the peace, plenty, and good government of the country. The testimony of contemporaneous writers, generally, confirms the opinion taken by these parties; and that of Pierce, the then Bishop of Bath and Wells, if true, only shows the degraded character of the majority of the clergy in his diocese, while his account of the religious revels themselves is sufficient to secure their condemnation by all religious men.* Charles, however, disregarded the prayer of the petition, and instead of gravely considering a subject of so much importance, was influenced by the archbishop to re-publish the Book of Sports on the 18th of October, 1633, with the following addition:—"Out of a pious care for the service of God, and for suppressing of those humours that oppose truth, and for the ease, comfort, and recreation of his majesty's well-deserving people, he doth ratify his blessed father's declaration, the rather, because of late in some counties of the kingdom, his majesty finds, that under pretence of taking away an abuse, there hath been a general forbidding, not only of ordinary meetings, but of the feasts of the dedication of churches, commonly called wakes;† it is,

* For example, "church ales are when the people go from afternoon prayers on Sundays to their lawful sports and pastimes in the church-yard, or in some public house, where they drink and make merry, etc." "Clerk ales are for the better maintenance of the parish clerk," by sending him provisions and buying his ale, and drinking it with him, on the Sunday. Neal, i. 566—568. Mackintosh's Continuator is a sorry guide here, approving of Laud's conduct, and sneering at "Neal and other writers of his party," besides misrepresenting him.

† These wakes are still observed in a more harmless manner in many parts of the kingdom. But their influence even now is most demoralizing.

therefore, his will and pleasure, that these feasts with others shall be observed, and that all neighbourhood and freedom with man-like and lawful exercises be used; and the justices of the peace are commanded not to molest any in their recreations, having first done their duty to God; and continuing in obedience to his majesty's laws."*

The result of this measure was a revival of the discussion on the obligations of the Sabbath; the puritans arguing for the sanctity of the day, and the court clergy against it, according to their tastes. Many of the latter contended for the propriety of dancing, masques, interludes, and revels, after sermon on the Sunday. The incongruity did not in any way strike them; the sacredness of the day depending, in their judgment, upon ecclesiastical authority alone.

Other results, however, of a more painful character, attended this declaration. Many of the clergy

* Happily, therefore, the puritans were still excluded from the privilege of turning the Sunday into a "tippling" day. Milton has given us his view of this subject. "This, I am sure, they took the best way to despoil us both of manhood and grace at once, and that in the shamefullest and ungodliest manner, upon that day which God's law, and even our own reason, hath consecrated, that we might have one day at least of seven set apart wherein to examine and increase our knowledge of God, to meditate and commune of our faith, our hope, our eternal city in heaven, and to quicken withal the study and exercise of charity; at such a time that men should be plucked from their soberest and saddest thoughts, and by bishops, the pretended fathers of the church, instigated, by public edict, and with earnest endeavour pushed forward to gaming, jigging, wassailing, and mixed dancing, is a horror to think!" Of Reformation in England, (1641) Child's Edition, p. 15.

refused to act upon it, and in the course of the seven following years, hundreds were suspended or deprived for their nonconformity in this respect. It proved an admirable instrument for the detection of puritanism, as it would probably in the present day, were such a declaration enforced once more. Many, however, who were scarcely to be classed under this head, were disgusted by it. A Dr. Denison is reported to have complied with the command to read it in church, but coupled with it the ten commandments, and afterwards added, "Dearly beloved, you have heard now the commandments of God and man: obey which you please." * Fuller tells us that one of the bishops, supposed to be Hall,† refused to return the names of the clergy of his diocese who had proved disobedient. The majority of the prelates, however, were subservient; and Wren of Norwich, in particular, rendered himself conspicuous by the severity with which he enforced this and other measures.

Unmixed as was the immediate evil resulting from this compulsory profanation of the Sabbath,‡ there were indirect consequences that operated beneficially. It was a winnowing process, that separated the chaff from the wheat, the pious from the profane. It drew the line of distinction more accurately between the two parties then at variance. It was a preliminary

* Price's History of Nonconformity, ii. 83.

† Hall, long ago, predicted the development of Laud's character. In 1606 he wrote one of his Epistles to Laud, then a poor bachelor of divinity, in which he says, "our adversaries think you ours; we, theirs; your conscience finds you with both, and neither! Cast off either your wings or your teeth! and, loathing this bat-like nature, be either a bird or a beast!" Hall's Epistles, v. vol. ii.

‡ "Mankind love sport as little as prayer by compulsion." Hallam's Constitutional History, ii. 78.

test, by which the loyal subjects of truth and religion were more effectually brought to know one another. But for this and other causes similarly operative, "the circumcised would have been mingled with the uncircumcised," and in the conflict which ensued some years after, the contending parties would with difficulty have known their respective sides. Thus, what Laud intended for the subjugation and punishment of his opponents, proved a judgment upon himself and those who acted in concert with him.*

About the same time, alterations were made in the book of Common Prayer, so as to suit it to the taste of the catholics, and render it more offensive to the puritans. The communion-table was turned into an altar, which was to be always fixed altar-wise, east and west; the practice of bowing at the name of Jesus, and towards the altar, was rigidly enforced; fresh injunctions were issued against the lecturers; great encouragement was given to all who preached up Arminian and high church doctrines, while such as endeavoured to expound the Gospel faithfully were frowned upon, discouraged, and under some plea or other deprived.† The fines extorted from various parties, lay and clerical, of the nobility and of the commonalty, went chiefly to the erection and decoration of new churches, and a great proportion to St. Paul's Cathedral, the rebuilding of which had been commenced by Laud in 1630. It has been computed that a hundred and

* See Baxter's testimony to the effect of this measure upon his father's family,—"though there was no savour of nonconformity in it,"—in his Works, xiii. 444.

† See Henry Burton's Two Sermons, entitled, "For God and the King," (1636) for a faithful and fearful catalogue of the "changes" now introduced. Hanbury, i. 558, 559.

thirteen thousand pounds were expended upon that structure in the course of the ten following years; and being derived from these sources, it was, as Neal informs us, a common "proverb, that St. Paul's was repaired with the sins of the people." * In addition to these things, enormous cruelty was practised upon some parties who had become obnoxious to the archbishop and the court. The principal sufferers were Prynne, Bastwick, and Burton, the story of whose wrongs is essential to a proper understanding of this portion of our history.

William Prynne, according to Hallam, was "a lawyer of uncommon erudition, and a zealous puritan." Some years back, he had distinguished himself by his opposition to the court theologians, and narrowly escaped the vengeance of the High Commission. In 1632, he afforded his enemies an opportunity of gratifying their malice by publishing a book entitled "Histrio-Mastix; the Player's Scourge, or the Actor's Tragedy." It was "full of invectives against the theatre, which he sustained by a profusion of learning." † Those who know what the theatre was in those days, will not be surprised that any man of earnest piety should oppose the outrageous indecency and immorality connected with it. The only matter for wonder is, that any man should have the courage to write against practices which, however degrading, were sanctioned by the king and his court, and by the bishops of the church, no less than by the aristo-

* Neal, i. 552. So, also, Milton, speaking of the prelates, says, "Their trade being, by the same alchemy that the pope uses, to extract heaps of gold and silver out of the people's sins." Of Reformation, &c. Prose Works, p. 15.

† Hallam's Constitutional History, ii. 51.

cracy.* The puritans generally were the determined opponents of the stage, not on account of any want of good taste, or inability to appreciate what is sublime in action and exquisite in art; but because, without exception, or nearly so, as any one versed in the history and literature of the drama of that period may judge, the histrionic art was perverted to the most debasing purposes, and ministered to the growing depravity of the age.† Prynne had the merit of lashing the prevalent vices only too effectually, and, sparing no class, was especially severe against those whose station and profession should have ensured a better order of things. A modern writer has characterized his book as "the labour of several years of misanthropic temper and brooding fanaticism." ‡ More candid judges, however, will form a different estimate of it. Its point and sting were to be found in its truth. Noy, the attorney-general, had read it twice, had placed a presentation copy from Prynne in the library of Lincoln's Inn, and protested that he did not see any thing censurable in it. This, however, was before he had received the "command" to prosecute the author. By the procurement of Laud, and the "inferences" of Heylin, a case was with some

* See Winwood's testimony to the inebriate folly of King James, in this respect, vol. ii. 41—44; and Harrington's account of his drunken dance with "the Queen of Sheba;" Nugæ Antiquæ, i. 348—350, cited in Vaughan's History of England, i. 189—197.

† Osberne, and Dean White, neither of them precisians, amply confirm this view. The former speaks of "our divines" as sacrificing "more time to Bacchus than Minerva;" the latter, of the city theatres as scenes of the greatest disorder and profanity. But we want no other proof of the state of morals, than is to be found in the printed plays of "rare Ben Jonson."

‡ Mackintosh's History of England, continued, v. 149.

difficulty made out against Prynne.* He was summoned into the Star Chamber, and on the 1st of February, 1633, committed to the Tower. No specific cause was mentioned in the warrant, and a whole year passed by without even the form of a trial. In 1634, he was prosecuted in the Star Chamber, where to be prosecuted was to be condemned. Probably, if the court had had the power, they would have sentenced him to die; as it was, they inflicted the severest punishment short of death,† aggravated by the virulent and coarse brutality with which, one by one, they assailed him. Lord Cottington, who presided, delivered a long speech full of the grossest absurdities. In the course of it he said, "Although the defendant pretends to have written this book alone, surely he was assisted immediately by the devil himself, or rather he hath assisted the devil."‡ Sackville, Earl of Dorset, the wit of the day, the polished representative of the court, and the crowning demonstration of the ameliorating influences of the drama, expressed his judgment in the following terms:—"Mr. Prynne I do declare to be a schism-maker in the church, a sedition-sower in the commonwealth, a wolf in sheep's clothing; in a word, *omnium malorum*

* A New Discovery of the Prelate's Tyranny, &c., quoted in Hanbury, i. 512. Heylin appears to have been actuated by pure malice.

† "It was held competent for the Court to adjudge any punishment *short of death.*" Hallam's Constitutional History, ii. 45.

‡ From being a menial servant, this man became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and died a papist. In John Kirk's Seven Champions of Christendom, (1642,) he is thus spoken of:—

"*Tarpax.* Lie to get profit; borrow, pay no debts,
Cheat and purloin, they are gaming dicers' bets.
Clown. If *Cottington* outdo me I'll be whip'd."

nequissimus.* I shall fine him ten thousand pounds, which is more than he is worth, yet less than he deserveth: I will not set him at liberty, no more than a plagued man or a mad dog, who, though he cannot bite, he will foam. He is so far from being a sociable soul, that he is not a rational soul; he is fit to live in dens with such beasts of prey as wolves and tigers, like himself: therefore I do condemn him to perpetual imprisonment, as those monsters that are no longer fit to live among men, nor to see light. I should burn him in the forehead, and slit him in the nose; for I find that it is confessed of all, that Doctor Leighton's offence was less than Mr. Prynne's: then why should Mr. Prynne have a less punishment? He that was guilty of murder was marked in a place where he might be seen, as Cain was. I should be loath he should escape with his ears, for he may get a periwig, which he now so much inveighs against, and so hide them, or force his conscience to use his unlovely love-lock on both sides. Therefore I would have him branded on the forehead, slit in the nose, and his ears cropped, too." †

Such was the judgment of "the most brutal and servile of these courtiers." ‡ The other members of the council, however, coincided with him, and Prynne suffered all the indignities recommended. Besides this, he was excluded from the bar and from the Society of Lincoln's Inn, degraded at Oxford, forbidden to follow his profession, and his book publicly burned by the hands of the common hangman.

* Of all wicked men the most wicked.

† Rushworth, ii. 240.

‡ Hallam's Constitutional History, ii. 51. The author adds, "though Clarendon speaks well of him."

Such, however, was the spirit of the man, that he occupied himself in prison, after all these barbarities had been inflicted upon him, in inquiries respecting the power and authority of the prelates, the results of which he afterwards published.

Shortly after this, two other persons incurred the displeasure of the prelatical party, and suffered accordingly. The one was Dr. Bastwick, a physician of Colchester; the other, Mr. Burton, B.D., a clergyman of the church of England, afterwards celebrated as an advocate of Independency. *

Dr. Bastwick had published a work in which he denied the divine right of episcopacy. For this he was cited before the High Commission, excommunicated, degraded from his profession, fined a thousand pounds, and imprisoned until he should recant.

Henry Burton had preached two sermons, already referred to, full of bitter complaints against the innovations upon the doctrine and worship of the church, and charging the prelates with undermining the constitutional government of the country.† The resistance offered by Burton to the tyranny of the day has been overlooked by most of the historians. No man of that age, not even Hampden, took a more enlightened view of the unconstitutional and perilous manner in which the affairs of the kingdom were conducted; and no man was more earnest in prosecuting his object as a patriot and as a martyr. He was a most fearless soul. His appeal to the king in his own defence, and in opposition to the illegal acts

* Even at this time, there is reason to believe, he was a Congregationalist. See his "Law and the Gospel Reconciled," (1631) p. 3.

† See back, p. 148, note.

of the bishops, is one of the most affecting and yet manly statements we remember to have read; while the fact that it was ineffectual, is one of the most convincing illustrations of the complete revolution which Laud and Wentworth had brought about in the affairs both of the state and of the church.* In his sermon, he had reminded the king of his royal declaration in the subscription to the Petition of Right—"The king willeth, that right be done, according to the laws and customs of the realm: and that the statutes be put in due execution, and his subjects may have no cause to complain of any wrong or oppressions, contrary to their just rights and liberties." Now, that he is summoned to appear before one of the High Commission, he proceeds as a subject to act in accordance with that declaration. Instead of appearing, he appeals to the king. He had suffered already at the hands of the High Commission, and had been released from their grasp only by a prohibition from the civil court. Such, however, was the influence brought to bear upon that court, that a prohibition could no longer be obtained. He was therefore compelled to appeal to the monarch against the illegal proceedings of the Commission; and fearing lest his appeal might not reach his majesty, published it to the world, in hope that "some well-minded man" might bring it under his notice. In this document he says, "I except against the competency of those judges who plainly appear to be both parties in the cause, and adversaries to my person for the cause's sake; and therefore, by the common, civil, and canon law, yea, by the very laws of God and nature, which

* Ever since Leighton's case, Laud and Wentworth had acted in concert.

prohibit any man to be a judge in his own cause, especially when the party is an enemy to him that is to be judged by him." He further objects, on constitutional and legal grounds, to the proceedings of the High Commission court, as violating the statute of Elizabeth which requires that all ecclesiastical jurisdiction whatsoever shall be exercised in the name and under the control of the crown.* By this time, the Commission was accustomed to act without the formal sanction of the king; which was, in fact, an usurpation of sovereignty. If for this reason only, Burton had a right to be heard; but his voice was too feeble, and his foes knew too well the kind of ruler they had over them, to be moved by his remonstrances. All was at present in vain. The prelates were too powerful, and the king connived at their misdeeds. He was seized in his own house, after violent means had been used to obtain entrance; committed to prison; and detained there, in close confinement, until his trial.†

Prynne and Bastwick, who had again rendered themselves obnoxious by publishing pamphlets against the hierarchy during their imprisonment, were now associated with Burton, and all three were tried in the Star Chamber together. Before the cause came on, they prepared their defence, and endeavoured to obtain the signature of counsel to the pleas which they put in. Such, however, was the state of the bar, that no two could be found courageous enough to discharge their duty. Burton, alone, was able to procure the signature of one; and he was reviled for his presump-

* 1 Elizabeth, cap. 1.

† A Narrative of the Life of Mr. Henry Burton, p. 12; Hanbury, i. 563.

tion by the justices Brampston and Finch, and informed that he "deserved to have his gown pulled over his ears." * In consequence of the "informality" arising from this want of counsel's signatures, Prynne and Bastwick were "summarily dealt with."† Burton alone was permitted to defend his cause, and this only in appearance. The judges took the precaution of cutting the ground from under his feet, by expunging from his answer "the body and substance of it," so that if he had been heard by counsel, his defence would have been incomplete and worthless. He therefore determined to reject such aid altogether. On the 14th of June, 1637, the mock trial came off. Prynne and Bastwick spoke first. When Burton's turn arrived, he proved his honesty and fearlessness before the court in the following words:—

"My Lords,—I perceive how I am brought into a great strait, either to desert my cause and my conscience, or to expose my person to the censure of this honourable court: and seeing the necessity of the one of these two, I have and do, without any further deliberation, resolve rather to expose my person to the censure of this honourable court, than to desert my cause and my conscience."

These were the words of an enlightened, conscientious, and daring man, who knew the consequences involved in such a declaration, but emboldened by a sense of innocency and wrong was prepared to act nobly. As he spoke, a suppressed expression of sympathy and approval prevailed amongst the hearers,

* St. John, the celebrated counsel in Hampden's case, is said to have rendered some assistance, for which he endured a petty persecution.

† "Pro confesso;" that is, as if upon confession.

who were "much affected with this his Christian resolution." Silence was proclaimed through the court, and the almost exhausted forbearance of the multitude renewed its self-controlling efforts, in hope of a future season of retribution and reversal.

At length Lord Cottington pronounced the sentence in the following words, "I condemn these three men to lose their ears in the Palace Yard at Westminster: to be fined five thousand pounds a man, to his majesty: and to perpetual imprisonment in three remote places of the kingdom, namely, the castles of Carnarvon, Cornwall, and Lancaster." The Lord Chief Justice Finch, added, "Mr. Prynne to be stigmatized in the cheeks with two letters, S and L, for a seditious libeller." In justice let it be added, that some of the lords withheld their assent.

On the 30th of June the sentence was executed. Palace Yard was crowded with a vast and ever-growing assemblage. It was easy to see what was the mind of the people. The path along which the martyrs were brought to the pillory was "strewed with sweet herbs," with "all the honour that could be done unto them." Bastwick and Burton made their appearance on the scaffold first; and on meeting, embraced each other before the public gaze, with mutual expressions of affection and with mutual congratulations at being counted worthy thus to suffer for conscience' sake. While thus occupied Prynne arrived, and the same scene was repeated to the delight of the spectators. Scarcely had they finished, when Bastwick's wife arrived: prepared to render him all the honour and sympathy of a wife in such a crisis. She could not speak; but her actions were more significant than any words could have been. On her

"saluting each ear with a kiss," the populace understood her meaning, and were so wrought upon that they gave "a marvellous great shout," which made Palace Yard ring again. After this, Bastwick spoke aloud before the people, telling them the "occasion" of his trouble, and exhorting them not to be dismayed by the spectacle of the sufferings about to be inflicted upon himself and his companions in trial. He thanked them warmly for the support that had been afforded through their prayers. "I know," he said, "there be many here who have set many days apart for our behalf,—let the prelates take notice of it,—and have sent up strong prayers to heaven for us." He encouraged them to "preserve innocency and peace within," and to persevere "in the strength" of that God, who would never fail them, not even in such a day as that. After asseverating for the second time, that if he had as many lives as hairs upon his head, or drops of blood in his veins, he would give them all up in such a cause, he concluded as follows:—"We owe no malice to the persons of any of the prelates, but would lay our necks under their feet, to do them good as they are men; but against the usurpations of their power as they are bishops, we do profess ourselves enemies till doomsday."

Prynne now advanced and spoke to the people. "For my own part," he said, "rather than I will have my case a leading case to deprive the subjects of their liberty, which I seek to maintain, I will joyfully expose my person to be a leading example to bear this punishment." After recounting how all three had been condemned without trial, or "so much as one witness produced" against them, he proceeded as follows:—"The prelates find themselves exceedingly

vexed and aggrieved with us, that we affirm their episcopal jurisdiction and superintendency over other ministers not to be of divine authority! I make no doubt but there are some of the bishops' intelligencers within hearing; whom I would have well to know and take notice of what I now say. If I make it not good, let me be hanged up at the Hall gate."

On this the populace gave a great shout, and Prynne proceeded:—"Now I make a second challenge, against all the lawyers in the kingdom, in a fair dispute. I speak it again, I here challenge all the whole society of the law, upon a fair dispute, to maintain that the sending forth of writs and process in the prelates' own names, and under their own seals, to be against law, and to intrench on the king's prerogative royal, and the subjects' liberty. If I be not able to make it good, let me be put to the most tormenting death they can devise. We fear none but God and the king. Had we respected our liberty, we had not stood here at this time; and did you know how deeply they have intrenched on your liberties in point of law, and upon our established religion in point of popery; if you knew but into what times you are cast, it would make you look about you! And if you did but see what changes and revolutions, of laws, religions, and ceremonies, have been made of late by *one* man; you would narrowly look into your privileges. You see, there be no degrees or professions of men exempted from suffering under the prelates' malice. Here is a reverend divine, for the soul; a physician, for the body; and a lawyer, for the estate. I had thought they would have let alone those of their own rochet, and not have meddled with any of their own *sacred order;* and yet the next, for aught

I know, that is to follow us, and receive a censure in Star Chamber, is like to be a bishop!* Gentlemen, look to yourselves; you know not whose turn it may be next. I beseech you all stand firm, and be zealous for the cause of God and his true religion, to the shedding of your dearest blood; otherwise, you will bring yourselves and your posterity into perpetual bondage to these Romish innovators and tyrannizing prelates."

The effect of these words upon the people was very great; and Laud, who sat in the Star Chamber, and received information from his "intelligencers" as to what was going on, moved that the speaker might be gagged. In this, however, he was overruled.

Burton's turn came next. His pillory, we are informed, stood alone near the Star Chamber, and about "half a stone's cast" from the double pillory where Bastwick and Prynne were doomed to suffer. But all three had their faces turned in the same direction, towards the south; and it so happened that the bright sun "all the while, for the space of two hours," was "shining upon them:" an emblem of the light and peace that beamed in upon their souls from an orb yet more radiant and glorious. On being put into the pillory Burton exclaimed, "Shall I be ashamed of a pillory for Christ, who was not ashamed of a cross for me? Good people, I am brought hither to be 'a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men.' And howsoever I stand here to undergo the punishment of

* And so it proved. In July, Williams, bishop of Lincoln, was suspended from all ecclesiastical offices, fined £10,000, and imprisoned during the king's pleasure. The pretence for which this heavy punishment was inflicted, was his divulging the king's secrets; the real cause, Laud's malice. Brief Relation, p. 23.

a rogue, yet, except to be a faithful servant to Christ, and a loyal subject to the king, be the property of a rogue, I am no rogue." He then stated the reason for which he had thus been treated, justifying himself in what he had done. One of the people had presented him with a nosegay, which he held in his hand. A bee settled upon it, and became a minister of comfort to his mind. "Do ye not see this poor bee?" he said, "she hath found out this very place, to suck sweetness from these flowers; and cannot I suck sweetness in this very place from Christ?" One of the spectators asked him how he was; "Never better, I bless God," was his reply, "who hath counted me worthy thus to suffer." Some one inquired if the pillory were not uneasy; "How can Christ's yoke be uneasy?" said he: "this is Christ's yoke; he bears the heavier end of it, and I the lighter: and if mine were too heavy, he would bear that too." The keeper was proceeding to ease the pillory, when he exclaimed, with a grave but cheerful countenance, "Trouble not yourself; I was never in such a pulpit before. But little do you know what fruits God is able to produce from this dry tree! Remember it well; for this day will never be forgotten, and through these holes, God can bring light to his church."

After this, he turned his face as well as he could towards the other pillory, and making a sign with his hand, called out in a loud and cheerful voice to Bastwick and Prynne, asking them how they were. The reply, which still seems to echo in the ear, was "very well!"

A woman standing near, said, "Sir, every Christian is not worthy this honour which the Lord hath cast on you this day."

Another said, "There are hundreds who by God's assistance would willingly suffer for the cause you suffer for." Burton replied in suitable terms to both, reminding them of Christ's "military discipline," and exhorting them to be prepared to suffer as well as do his will.

A cheerful message was now brought to him from his wife, which kindled afresh the spark of enthusiasm in his soul. He blessed God for her, and added, "She is but a young soldier of Christ; but hath already endured many a sharp brunt, and the Lord will strengthen her unto the end." Then looking upon a new pair of gloves that he wore, he said, with some humour, "My wife yesterday, of her own accord, brought me these wedding gloves, for this is my wedding day!"

Such was the spirit of these men up to this point. But the worst had yet to come. The executioner now approached, and a thrill of horror ran through the multitude. "Sir," said one of them to Burton, "the executioner is coming; I pray God strengthen you." "I trust he will;" was the calm reply. The executioner came, and did his worst;—Burton was unmoved. The knife appears to have been used in a barbarous manner, cutting deep into the flesh, and causing the blood to flow from both ears in a copious stream. The people uttered a loud moan of pity and indignation, and cried out for a surgeon to staunch the wounds; while many that were near dipped their handkerchiefs in the blood, "as a most precious thing." All the while the sufferer himself was patient as a lamb. Holding up his hands, he said, "Be content; it is well; blessed be God, it cannot be better bestowed." And afterwards he was heard to

utter the prayer, "The Lord keep us, that we do not dishonour him in any thing."

Bastwick displayed similar fortitude. On being let out of the pillory on to the scaffold, he took the sponge, all bloody as it was, from his ear, and lifting up his eyes, waved it over his head, and cried, "Blessed be my God, who hath counted me worthy, and of his mighty power hath enabled me to suffer any thing for his sake! And as I have now lost some of my blood, so I am ready and willing to spill every drop that is in my veins, in this cause for which I now have suffered; which is, for maintaining the truth of God, and the honour of my king, against popish usurpations. Let God be glorified; and let the king live for ever!"

Prynne suffered most, and most heroically. The executioner is said to have performed his work with extraordinary cruelty, as if he had been feed for the purpose. The branding on the cheeks was effected with a very hot iron, and, as if one impression were not enough, the application of the burning letters was repeated. His ears, which had been mutilated before but had been sewn on again, were dreadfully mangled. In cutting off one, the executioner took part of the cheek along with it; while the other was hacked and left hanging, till the surgeon called him back, and bade him cut it off. As soon as this process of torture was over, Prynne gave vent to his thoughts in the following brief sentence: "The more I am beat down, the more I am lift up;" and, on coming off the pillory, added, "Now, blessed be God, I have conquered and triumphed over the prelates' malice, and feel myself so strong that I could encounter them all together at this very moment."

When their wounds had been dressed they were recommitted, and afterwards transported to separate prisons in the islands of Scilly, Guernsey, and Jersey, far from observation, in solitary confinement. On their way, however, they could not but perceive that the people were with them. Their progress was a triumph. Every where they were received as martyrs in the cause of religion and liberty; and it was evident that the nation at large was unwilling to be tamed down to submission, even by such severe examples.*

We have selected these cases as exemplifications only of the present course of affairs. They are confessedly the worst that occurred. But in many other instances the spirit of the ruling party betrayed itself in a similar manner. It would occupy many chapters to detail severally the cases of persecution which meet us in the history of this period.† Neither was Laud the only bishop whose name deserves to be handed down to posterity in connection with these despotic proceedings. Pierce, of Bath and Wells, and Wren, of Norwich, rendered themselves infamous by the cruelty with which they prosecuted their prelatical aims. The former put down all lecturing in his diocese, and affirmed that "he saw no such need of preaching now as in the apostles' days." The latter deprived or suspended no less than fifty of the

* See Hanbury, i. 569—574, for an account of their progress, and of their treatment when they arrived at their destination.

† Lilburne, the publisher, was fined, whipped, and put into the pillory, for refusing to take an oath to answer questions respecting the imputed libels he had either published or imported; and while speaking against the bishops from the pillory, he was gagged by order of the Star Chamber. This was in 1638.

clergy in the course of a comparatively short period;* while between two and three thousand manufacturers, many of whom employed a hundred work-people, were driven by persecution from the kingdom. Nothing could be more impolitic than the last-mentioned proceeding. Thousands were thrown out of employ in the neighbourhood of Norwich; and to this day the memory of Wren is execrated in Norfolk, on account of the ruin in which so many families were involved by his means.†

At the same time, the archbishop was the instigator to these iniquitous deeds, and regarded them with satisfaction, when committed. In his accounts annually rendered to the king, in his private diary, and in his correspondence with Wentworth, he furnishes abundant evidence of the fact that all was done with his approval.‡ His treatment of the Dutch and French protestants in England is sufficient in itself to show that he had determined to spare none who could be brought in any way under his power. These exiles had been exempted from episcopal jurisdiction ever since the days of Edward; and so late as 1626 their privileges had been confirmed by Charles in an order to the judges "to permit and suffer," them and their children, "quietly to enjoy all and singular such

* Wren's visitation articles embraced eight hundred and ninety-seven questions, which were to be asked of the clergy in any case of suspected puritanism. See a specimen of them in Neal, i. 591, 592.

† Neal, i. 581; Lilly's Observations upon the Life and Death of Charles the First, (1774) p. 219; Parentalia, p. 11.

‡ Lilly seems to make an exception in the case of Wren; but the manner in which Laud is reported to have spoken of him is quite compatible with an approval of his measures against the puritans.

privileges and immunities as have been formerly granted unto them, without any troubles, arrests, or proceedings by way of information or otherwise." Neither had any evil resulted from this favour. The industrious habits and moral character of the foreigners had secured the respectful notice of all parties. It appeared, however, to Laud that such an exception to the rule of conformity as was presented in their case would operate detrimentally to his aims, as well as mar the harmony of a complete subordination to his ecclesiastical rule. He therefore sought, first by stealthy approaches to the royal ear, and afterwards by open objections to their privileges, to reduce them to submission. After tendering the churches composed of this class some questions, which they refused to answer, on the ground of their exemption from his oversight by royal charter, he sent them an injunction, through his vicar-general, to the effect that all of them who were born in England should repair to their parish churches. On their remonstrating by petition, he refused to recede from his point. "I do expect," said he, "all obedience and conformity to my instructions. If you refuse (as you have no cause to do, and I hope you will not), I shall then proceed against the natives, according to the laws and canons ecclesiastical." He was as good as his word. The majority, therefore, were dispersed, and compelled to seek a home elsewhere. Not content with this, the ambitious prelate sought to bring the English churches abroad under his control in a similar manner, and discountenanced protestantism, wherever his influence could affect it, in other lands.

Indeed it has been affirmed by many writers, that the ultimate object of Laud in all his measures was to

prepare the way for the re-establishment of popery. Nor are there wanting various documents, to prove that if he was not bent upon this object, there were others connected with the court, who sanctioned his innovations from such a motive. The following letter from Queen Henrietta to Madame de Motteville, is very strong evidence respecting the cause of many of the mysterious proceedings of this period.

"King James," she writes, "composed two books, in defence of the false religion of England, and replied to those which Cardinal Perron wrote against him. In defending falsehood, he conceived the love for the truth, and wished to withdraw himself from error. This was by desiring to harmonize the two religions, his and ours; but he died without executing this laudable design. King Charles Stuart, his son, when he came to the crown, found himself in the same state of mind. He had near him the Bishop of Canterbury, who being at heart a good catholic, inspired in the king, his master, a great desire of re-establishing the liturgy; believing that if he could carry his point so far, there would be so little difference between the orthodox faith and theirs, he should be easily able to conduct the king to it by little and little. To accomplish this great work, which appeared to the king, nothing more than the perfect re-establishment of the liturgy, and which was the sole design in the heart of the prince; the Archbishop of Canterbury advised him to commence with the Scotch people, as being the farthest removed from the heart of the kingdom. The king before going, and wishing to send this liturgy into Scotland, brought it one evening into the queen's chamber, and begged her to read the book, telling her that he should be well pleased for her to see it,

that she might know how well they agreed in their belief."*

It is difficult to say how much credit is to be given to such a narration as this; more especially as other writers of the period give a very different account of the matter. At the same time there were many circumstances corroborative of the view, which this letter would warrant. The court of Rome was exceedingly gracious, and seems to have entertained strong hopes of reclaiming England to the catholic faith. While the queen had her representative and agent at Rome, one legate after another was sent to England, with proposals of an indubitable character. Diplomatic relations were established, negotiations were entered upon, and plans of reconciliation were actually submitted to some of the bishops of the church of England. The prosecution of recusants was forcibly stopped by the punishment of the pursuivants employed in detecting them; and if no practical issue was arrived at, there was certainly enough of popish ceremonial in the innovations introduced by Laud, to alarm and exasperate many besides the puritans and Congregationalists.†

If there is any ground for doubt respecting the popish aims of Laud, there is none respecting the despotic spirit by which he was actuated. It is apparent from the correspondence between Laud and Wentworth at this period, that it was their purpose to bring the subjects of the realm into a state of perfect subjection, both in a civil and ecclesiastical point of

* Mem. de Motteville, i. 242. Hallam's Const. Hist. ii. 97, note.

† See Hallam's Const. Hist. ii. chap. viii. for a fair estimate of the evidence on this subject.

view. Their aim was indicated by the word "thorough," which appears in so many of their letters, as their continual watchword.* Encouraging and almost inflaming one another with zealous thoughts of what they might accomplish in the subjugation of the people, they rushed against every barrier that interposed to prevent their progress. Even the king's name was set aside in order to subdue his subjects under him; and their accomplices and subordinates were all too slow in executing the various parts of the "thorough system," by which the country was to be governed. Every thing like opposition chafed their spirits, and woe to the instruments, great or little, by whom their work was in any way impeded! The chief obstruction in their way was, unfortunately for them, a very ancient and serious one, namely, the law and the lawyers. As far as was possible, they endeavoured to set even this aside; now by castigating obnoxious barristers, now by tampering with the judges, and now by invading the jurisdiction of the civil courts. "I should not deem it improbable," says Hallam, referring to Laud, "that he had formed, or rather adopted from the canonists, a plan, not only of rendering the spiritual jurisdiction independent, but of extending it to all civil causes, unless, perhaps, in questions of freehold."† But for the liberties at stake, it would be sufficiently amusing to see how these tyrannical rulers in church and state vex themselves with the recital of the legal impediments in their way. "The church," says Laud, "is so bound up in the forms of the common law, that it is not possible for me or for any man to do that good which he

* Strafford Letters, i. 111, 155, 359.

† Constit. Hist. ii. 64.

would, or is bound to do. For your lordship sees, no man clearer, that they which have gotten so much power in and over the church will not let go their hold." "I know no reason," his correspondent replies from Ireland, "but you may as well rule the common lawyers in England as I, poor beagle, do here; and yet that I do, and will do, in all that concerns my master, at the peril of my head. I am confident that the king, being pleased to set himself in the business, is able, by his wisdom and ministers, to carry any just and honourable action through all imaginary opposition, for real there can be none; that to start aside for such panic fears, fantastic apparitions, as a Prynne or an Eliot shall set up, were the meanest folly in the whole world." *

When the affairs of the kingdom were managed in this manner, it is not surprising that the great mass of the people should become disaffected. The religion of the puritans alone prevented them from rising in rebellion against their relentless oppressors. Multitudes left the kingdom, exporting with them their wealth.† The majority repaired to New England, where town after town rose up in quick succession, the monuments of England's tyranny, and the living germs

* Strafford Letters, i. 111, 173.

† Neal (i. 546,) states that in twelve years of Laud's administration "there went over about four thousand planters, carrying over with them in materials, money, and cattle, etc., not less than to the value of one hundred and ninety-two thousand pounds." He also states, "it has been computed that the four settlements of New England drained England of four or five hundred thousand pounds in money (a very great sum in those days,) and if the persecution of the puritans had continued twelve years longer, it is thought that a fourth part of the riches of the kingdom would have passed out of it through this channel."

of America's future greatness. Suffering in the mother country prepared the colonists to endure hardships in the land of their adoption; and the conscientious motives that had compelled them to emigrate, guided them now in all their commercial and civil pursuits, and gave them a character and influence unparalleled in any other part of the world. We must refer the reader to the history of the puritans for particular details respecting the more prominent persons amongst the emigrants of this period.* There are two points, however, that demand notice, as bearing upon our subject. The first relates to the intercourse that was kept up between the New England settlers and their old associates in this kingdom, and the second to the manner in which the system of emigration was checked.

It is not likely that, after the lapse of a few years, any of the colonists would retain anything more than a general interest in English affairs. Fully occupied with new pursuits and scenes, it was hardly to be expected that they would have much leisure to bestow upon the state of parties at home, whether political or ecclesiastical. They were now at liberty; and thanking God for it, they sought to turn it to the best account. This, however, was not equally the case with those of their friends, who, for various reasons, chose to remain in their native land. Amidst the change from bad to worse that was going on, they often turned their thoughts to their former companions in distress, now freed from bondage, and enjoying ease in a distant part of the world. They received all tidings respecting them with great avidity, and from time to time many of their number, encouraged

* Neal, part ii. cap. v. vi.

by the report of their success, imitated their example, and crossed the seas to join them. Now and then, however, intelligence was received that pained the minds of some at least of the puritans at home. Their old friends, they heard, had changed their sentiments and practices on many important points; were becoming more and more like the separatists; and therefore stood in need of friendly counsel respecting the dangers incident to their state of liberty. There is something pleasing in the circumstance that, amidst their own manifold trials, the puritans at home could take so deep an interest in the religious condition of their friends abroad. At the same time, they were not in the right position to judge how far the changes, of which they heard such exaggerated reports, were necessary to the consistent carrying out of their own avowed principles. Connected as they were with a dominant system, there were innumerable influences tending to bias their judgment in favour of an imperfect development of those principles; and the theme of separation had been discussed amidst so many prejudices, that the practice of separation had become at length quite a bugbear, even with men whose consistency could be maintained only in connexion with it. At length, however, or in 1637, some of the ministers in and about London addressed a letter to "their brethren" in New England, asking for information respecting their practices, and calling upon them to justify the same. This letter was, in part, as follows:—

"While we lived together in the same kingdom, we professed the same faith, joined in the same ordinances, laboured in the work of God, to gain souls unto his kingdom, and maintained the purity of wor-

ship against corruptions, both on the right hand and on the left. But since your departure into New England, we hear, and partly believe, that divers have embraced certain opinions, such as you disliked formerly, and we judge to be groundless and unwarrantable.

"These, and others such like, which we omit to reckon up, are written and reported to be the common tenets in New England; which are received with great applause, maintained with great confidence, and applauded as the only church-way wherein the Lord is to be worshipped! And letters from New England have so taken with divers in many parts of this kingdom, that they have left our assemblies, because of a stinted liturgy; and excommunicated themselves from the Lord's supper, because of such as are not debarred from it; and being turned aside themselves, they labour to ensnare others, to the grief of the godly, the scandal of religion, the wounding of their own souls, if they did advisedly consider the matter, and great advantage of them that are wily to espy, and ready to make use of, all the advantages to prejudice the truth.

"Beloved brethren! if you stood in our places, we are well assured it would be no small grief unto you, to hear and see the people led aside, to the disgrace of the Gospel, upon weak and groundless imaginations; and, in rash and inconsiderate zeal, to deal with that which is of God as if it were of man! And if it be to us grief of heart, to hear that you have changed from that truth which you did profess, and embrace that for truth which, in former times, upon sound grounds, you did condemn as erroneous, we

hope you will not be offended. You know how oft it hath been objected, 'that nonconformists in practice are separatists in heart,' but that they go cross to their own positions, or smother the truth for sinister ends. They of the separation boast that they stand upon the nonconformists' ground; a vain-glorious flourish, and slight pretence! But both these are much countenanced by your sudden change, if you be changed as it is reported. How shall your brethren be able to stand up in defence of their innocency and the uprightness of their cause, when your example and opinion shall be cast in their dish? Must they leave you now, with whom they have held society? Or, will you plead for separation, which you have condemned as rash and inconsiderate? You know that they who have run this way, have fallen into manifold divisions; and may you not justly fear lest the same befall you? Some warnings you have had al-already; and have you not cause to fear, every day, more and more? Error is very fruitful, and will speed apace. A crack in the foundation may occasion a wide breach in the building, where there will not be means, or mind, to amend it. Experience, every day, may tutor us herein.

"But to let pass all inconveniences, our request, in all meekness and love, is, that if these, or any of the forementioned opinions, be indeed your tenets, you would be pleased to take a second review of your grounds, and send us your strongest reasons that have swayed you on these matters. And if we shall find them, upon due examination, to be such as will carry weight, we shall be ready to give you the right hand of fellowship: if otherwise, you shall receive our just

and modest animadversions, in what we conceive you have erred from the truth."*

In reply to this letter, the brethren in New England acknowledged the many "gracious blessings" they had formerly enjoyed in communion with their present correspondents; but at the sametime justified themselves in every particular in which they were thought to have departed from their former practices. "In our native country," they said, "when we were first called to the ministry, many of us took some things to be indifferent and lawful, which, in after times, we saw to be sinful, and durst not continue in the practice of them *there*. Afterwards, some things that we bore as burdens, that is, as things inexpedient though not utterly unlawful, we have no cause to retain and practice the same things *here*—which would have been not only inexpedient but unlawful. Such things as a man may tolerate when he cannot remove them, he cannot tolerate without sin, when he may remove them. Besides, some things we practiced then, which we speak to our shame and grief, we never took into our serious consideration whether they were lawful and expedient or not: but took them for granted, and generally received not only by the most reformed churches, but by the most godly and judicious servants of God amongst them; which, nevertheless, when we came to weigh them in the balance of the sanctuary, we could not find sufficient warrant in the Word to receive them and establish them here. Of one of these three kinds will our present practices appear to be, which you call our new opinions or innovations here: except it be some few of them, which, though

* Hanbury, ii. 18, 19.

they have been reported to you to be our judgments and practices, yet are indeed far from us."*

The spirit and temper of these men are evinced in the following passage:—"We do not suspect your loves to the truth, or your sincere speaking according to your conscience in the sight of God; neither tax we you as siding from the truth 'with by-respects,' whereof you complain: verily, we abhor such rash, hard, and presumptuous censoriousness. We see as much cause to suspect the integrity of our own hearts as yours; and so much the more, as being more privy to the deceitfulness of our own hearts than of yours. And we cannot but with much thankfulness of heart acknowledge the many rich, precious treasures of his grace, wherewith the Lord hath furnished sundry of you above your brethren; which causeth us with great reverence to accept and receive what further light God may be pleased to impart unto us by you."†

They meet the charge of being separatists in a most forbearing manner, and at the same time, in such a way as to show that great misunderstanding still prevailed amongst the nonconformists respecting the principles of the separatists themselves. It is also plain, from the use of the word "congregation," that the correspondents on both sides were much agreed respecting congregational worship. "We intreat you, in the Lord, not to suffer such apprehensions to lodge in your minds which you intimate in your letters; as if we here justified the ways of rigid separation, which sometimes, amongst you, we have formerly borne witness against, and so build

* Ibid. p. 20. † Ibid. p. 21.

again the thing we have destroyed. You know they separate from your congregations, as no churches; from the ordinances dispensed by you, as mere anti-christian; and from yourselves, as no visible Christians: but we profess unfeignedly, we separate from the corruptions which we conceive to be left in your churches, and from such ordinances administered therein as we fear are not of God but of men; and from yourselves we are so far from separating, as from no visible Christians,—that you are in our hearts, (if the Lord would suffer it,) to live and die together. And we look at sundry of you as men of that eminent growth in Christianity, that, if there be any visible Christians under heaven, amongst you are the men; which we speak, not to prejudice any truth which ourselves are here taught and called to profess. But we still believe, though personal Christians may be eminent in their growth of Christianity, yet *churches* had still need to grow from apparent defects to purity, and from reformation to reformation, age after age, till the Lord have utterly abolished Antichrist with the breath of his mouth and the brightness of his coming, to the full and clear revelation of all his holy truth, especially touching the ordering of his house and public worship. As a pledge of this our estimation of you, and sincere affection to you, we have sent these answers to your demand, and shall be ready, by the help of Christ, to receive back again from you, wise, and just, and holy advertisements in the Lord."*

The replies which follow are too extended to be included in our pages; neither do they throw any important light upon the points at issue between the

* Hanbury, p. 21, 22.

correspondents. The main thing to be gathered from them is, that in many particulars the New England brethren had consolidated their views in relation to church government and divine worship, very much in accordance with those of Robinson and the church trained under his care.*

While the correspondence referred to above was going forward,† Laud and the court party were instituting measures with a view to arrest the progress of emigration. At an earlier period no opposition had been offered to those who left the kingdom for other shores. It was regarded as a great hardship to be compelled to depart the kingdom; and probably some time elapsed before the rulers were convinced that the American colonists were reaping a worthy reward for the perils of their voyage and the toil demanded of them after it in an uncultivated region. Besides this, it was a matter of great satisfaction to the various bishops to get rid of the more troublesome of their clergy, and to have an opportunity of filling their places with men of their own choice.‡ The progress of evil, however, is often unexpectedly retributive; and it proved so in the present instance. The smile of providence rested upon the spot where the exiles were gathered together. Though persecuted, they were not forsaken; and the news that reached England respecting their freedom and prosperity, reacted upon the people at

* For a particular account see Hanbury, ii. 23—39.

† The answers were not returned from New England until 1639.

‡ When Bridge of Norwich fled to Holland, in 1637, Laud informed Charles of the circumstance. His majesty wrote against Bridge's name in reply—"We are well rid of him."

home, rendering them more anxious for the return of better days, and kindling afresh in many minds those sparks of patriotism which tyranny had long endeavoured to extinguish. As soon as this was seen by Laud and his party, they altered their line of policy to meet the growing evil. On the 30th of April, 1637, a proclamation was issued to the following effect:—

"The king being informed that great numbers of his subjects are yearly transported to New England, with their families and whole estates, that they may be out of the reach of ecclesiastical authority, his majesty therefore commands that his officers of the several ports shall suffer none to pass without license from the commissioners of the plantations, and a testimonial from their minister of their conformity to the orders and discipline of the church."*

About the same time the following order of council, having reference to the clergy, was published:—

"Whereas it is observed, that such ministers who are unconformable to the discipline and ceremonies of the church do frequently transport themselves to the plantations, where they take liberty to nourish their factious and schismatical humours, to the hindrance of the good conformity and unity of the church,—we therefore expressly command you, in his majesty's name, to suffer no clergyman to transport himself without a testimonial from the archbishop of Canterbury and bishop of London."†

Notwithstanding these prohibitions, great numbers contrived to effect their passage, which led to active measures on the part of government to prevent such

* Neal, i. p. 601. † Ibid, p. 601.

acts in future. It is reported that certain parties of great celebrity were by these means retained for the service of their country. "Men of a higher rank," says Hallam, "than the first colonists, and now become hopeless alike of the civil and religious liberties of England—men of capacious and commanding minds, formed to be the legislators and generals of an infant republic—the wise and cautious Lord Say, the acknowledged chief of the Independent sect; the brave, open, and enthusiastic Lord Brooke; Sir Arthur Haselrig Hampden, ashamed of a country for whose rights he had fought alone; Cromwell, panting with energies that he could neither controul nor explain, and whose unconquerable fire was still wrapt in smoke to every eye but that of his kinsman, Hampden,—were preparing to embark for America, when Laud, for his own and his master's cause, procured an order of council to stop their departure."*

Such an incident as this is deeply interesting, and has called forth many eloquent, and some spiteful remarks, from the historians who have narrated it.† Whether true or false, it serves to show in how remarkable a manner the fate of nations depends

* Const. Hist. ii. p. 79. The reader must not suppose that Lord Say was *at present* "the acknowledged chief of the Independent sect," neither were the Independents known by that name at this time.

† Besides Hallam, see Hume, Harris, Nugent, Vaughan, Price, &c. Hume attributes the intended emigration to a desire on the part of Hampden and his associates to hear long sermons. Lord Nugent observes, in reply,—"The Presbyterians were the long preachers, and not the Independents. And Hampden and Cromwell, and their followers, were Independents and not Presbyterians." Memorials of Hampden, i. p. 255. Probably, the truth would be that the Presbyterians were the *longest*.

upon a continuous series of causes, some of which, simply considered, are trivial enough,—the caprice, the whim, the wrathful humour of an individual mind; but without which, that which happens could not have been.* It appears, however, very questionable whether the event now referred to ever happened. Neal, who is the chief authority, states the matter in the following words:—"There were eight sail of ships at once this spring, in the river Thames, bound for New England, and filled with puritan families, among whom (if we may believe Dr. George Bates and Mr. Dugdale, two famous royalists) were Oliver Cromwell, afterwards protector of the Commonwealth of England, John Hampden, Esq., and Mr. Arthur Haselrigge, who seeing no end of the oppressions of their native country, determined to spend the remainder of their days in America; but the council being informed of their design, issued out an order, dated May 1st, 1638, to make stay of those ships, and to put on shore all the provisions intended for the voyage."† The cautious manner in which Neal makes this statement is worthy of notice; and the discrepancy between the several versions of the matter, more especially in reference to the names of the detained parties, is enough to cast suspicion upon the common story. It may be that some, or even all, of the

* It is somewhat singular that John Milton should have started this same year on his continental tour.

† Neal, i. p. 622. It is to be observed that this authority makes no mention of Lords Say and Brooke. Another writer omits these names, as well as Hampden's, and mentions some not generally included, namely, Sir Matthew Boynton, and Sir William Constable. Winterbotham, ii. p. 30. This variation in names seems to indicate considerable uncertainty as to the fact.

persons named, entertained the idea of emigrating,* and that before it could be carried into effect the active measures of government put an end to it; but it is scarcely probable that parties so well known as Lords Brooke and Say, Haselrig, Hampden, and Cromwell, could have broken up their establishments and embarked for the voyage, without a pretty general knowledge of the fact. Neither is it likely that men of their spirit would have been so easily thwarted in their purpose, when many of less determination were not; and granting that they were thus compelled to return to their homes, can it be supposed that they would do so in such a quiet manner as to attract no notice from any parties whatever, excepting the two "famous royalists," mentioned by Neale?

Moreover, there are known facts, which seem to decide the point in so far as Hampden and Cromwell are concerned. The former was at this very period engaged in a contest with the crown, which made him "the most famous man in England." In January, 1636, he had refused to pay the assessment for ship-money, on the ground that the demand was illegal; on the 5th of May, process was issued against him; on the 6th of November, 1637, the trial of his case began at London, amidst general excitement; and it was not, according to some, until April,† and according to others, until June,‡ 1638, that judgment was

* Amongst the number of those who at an earlier period took out patents for colonizing purposes, "were the Lords Brooke, Say, and Seal, the Pelhams, the Hampdens, and the Pyms." Winterbotham, i. p. 30, Saybrook was the name of one of the settlements.

† Carlyle's Oliver Cromwell's Letters, etc. i. 124.

‡ Mackintosh continued, v. 162.

delivered. It is not probable that Hampden would seek to leave the kingdom while his case was pending; or, supposing it just settled, that he could so speedily have converted his estates into money, as to have been prepared to embark by the 1st of May, the date of the prohibition in question. With respect to Cromwell, we have proof that he was actively engaged this year in opposing the king in council, in relation to the "Drainage of the Fens" of Lincolnshire; calling meetings, and devising other measures than those which would be needful as preparatives for emigration. He would hardly have acquired the title of "Lord of the Fens," if he had been occupied at this time with thoughts of his own ease and comfort, instead of consulting the interests of his own county.*

On the whole, therefore, we are inclined to discredit the royalist story. It is sufficient to know that vigorous measures were adopted for the purpose of keeping at home those whose services were likely to be required at no distant period. New England was already rich in able and true-hearted men, and the influence of their example had told beneficially upon their brethren at home. It was now needful, in the providence of God, who accomplishes his purpose by evil agents as well as by good, that a check should be given to this drain upon our country's religion and

* Carlyle, i, 125. It was in October of this year that Cromwell wrote to Mrs. St. John, the celebrated letter, respecting his religious experience; for misinterpreting which, the Rev. Mark Noble receives the soubriquet of "my reverend imbecile friend," from the editor. It may be observed also that Cromwell had by this time, six children; so that, a removal to New England would demand some little forethought. While going to press we find this matter discussed, and set much at rest, in Miss Aikin's Memoir of Charles the First, chapter 13.

valour, as well as wealth. While Laud was bent upon the gratification of his malicious humour, he was taking the very step that led to his own punishment and the nation's safety. Rightly interpreted, this act of his was a command to England's bravest men to return to their posts, there to be ready for the hour of trying duty. But for this order in council, we might still have been groaning under the curse of a prolonged tyranny, with the additional misery of a hopeless subjugation to the babylonian woe. Such in fact was the light in which this matter was regarded a few years later, by those great and truly devout men, whose lot was cast in this season of accumulated wrong, but whose honour emerged untainted and triumphant from it. "Ever blessed be He, and ever glorified," exclaims one of the noblest of souls; "that from his high watch-tower in the heavens, discerning the crooked ways of perverse and cruel men, hath hitherto maimed and infatuated all their damnable inventions, and deluded their great wizards with a delusion fit for fools and children; had God been so minded, he could have sent a spirit of mutiny amongst us, as he did between Abimelech and the Sechemites, to have made our funerals, and slain heaps more in number, than the miserable surviving remnant; but he, when we least deserved, sent out a gentle gale and message of peace from the wings of those his cherubims that fan his mercy-seat. Nor shall the wisdom, the moderation, the Christian piety, the constancy of our nobility and commons of England, be ever forgotten, whose calm and temperate connivance could sit still and smile out the stormy bluster of men more audacious and precipitant than of solid and deep reach, until their own fury had run itself out of breath, assailing by rash and heady approaches the

impregnable situation of our liberty and safety; that laughed such weak engineery to scorn, such poor drifts to make a national war of a surplice brabble, a tippet scuffle, and engage the untainted honour of English knighthood to unfurl the streaming red cross, or to rear the horrid standard of those fatal guly dragons, for so unworthy a purpose, as to force upon their fellow-subjects that which themselves are weary of, the skeleton of a mass-book. Nor must the patience, the fortitude, the firm obedience of the nobles and people of Scotland, striving against manifold provocations; nor must their sincere and moderate proceedings hitherto be unremembered, to the shameful conviction of all their detractors.

"Go on both, hand in hand, O nations, never to be disunited; be the praise and the heroic song of all posterity; merit this, but seek only virtue, not to extend your limits; (for what needs to win a fading, triumphant laurel, out of the tears of wretched men?) but to settle the pure worship of God in his church, and justice in the state: then shall the hardest difficulties smooth out themselves before ye; envy shall sink to hell, craft and malice be confounded, whether it be homebred mischief or outlandish cunning: yea, other nations will then covet to serve ye, for lordship and victory are but the pages of justice and virtue. Commit securely to true wisdom the vanquishing and uncasing of craft and subtlety, which are but her two runagates: join your invincible might to do worthy and godlike deeds; and then he that seeks to break your union, a cleaving curse be his inheritance to all generations." *

* Of Reformation in England (1641); Milton's Prose Works, pp. 16, 17.

Such was John Milton's lofty retrospect of this period. He had enjoyed many opportunities of ascertaining the condition of the people, more especially of the learned and thoughtful; and in both town and country had seen the progress of corruption and arbitrary rule on the one hand, and of enlightened principle, combined with patient endurance of evil, on the other; which convinced him that both nobles and commoners would "sit still and smile out the stormy bluster" of prelatical despotism. He heard also from time to time, as he pursued his studies in Buckinghamshire, under his father's roof, the echo of that din, the cause of which he has so contemptuously described as a "surplice brabble" and "tippet scuffle;" and now and then, coming up to London, to improve his acquaintance with men and books, he would learn more accurately, and not without enthusiasm, how valiantly the people of Scotland were contending for the truth, resisting the forced liturgy prepared for them under Laud's directions, which, according to the queen's statement, was intended as the first step to the introduction of popery, and resisting it, not merely by words, but deeds, in which women as well as men proved their valour, until at length King Charles found himself prematurely hurried into a war with his own countrymen, the difficulties of which led on to the great catastrophe. Our great countryman saw all this, and so wrote. But it is evident that multitudes besides were of the same mind. While the "great wizards," Laud and Strafford, pushed relentlessly on with their "thorough system," and were deluding themselves with the idea that none "muttered, or peeped, or moved the wing," the God of providence, from his "watch-tower," was beholding with

acceptance the calm endurance of his own children, and over-ruling the excesses of oppression to the accomplishment of their deliverance.

We reserve what we have to say respecting some of the great men whose character was tempered to great deeds, during this period, for another place, when their principles seem to become more matured, and their views more definitely shaped out by the stirring events which succeed. It should be observed, however, that some eminent personages, afterwards connected with the Independent party, come under notice at this time as exiles, or as sufferers in the more remote parts of the kingdom.

Amongst the former were Dr. Thomas Goodwin, one of the greatest preachers of that day, and lecturer at Trinity Church, Cambridge; Philip Nye, of Magdalen College, Oxford, the popular preacher of St. Bartholomew's, London; Jeremiah Burroughes, of Cambridge University, lecturer at Stepney and at the Cripplegate; William Bridge, of Norwich, to whom reference has already been made; and Sidrach Simpson, of Cambridge University. These parties, afterwards known as "the Dissenting Brethren" of the Westminster assembly of divines, went over to Holland somewhere about the year 1638, the two first settling for a season at Arnheim, and the remainder at Rotterdam.* They were not at the time of their voluntary exile the decided Congregationalists they avowed themselves to be on their return some years afterwards. Their views, like those of multitudes connected with the church of England, were rather negative than positive. They knew what they

* Hanbury, ii. 40; Neal, i. 622, 623.

did not like, and what they could not conscientiously endure any longer. They regarded the various innovations of the prelatical party as so many "superstitions" which they might not follow, and hence they had to make choice of "violence and persecution" at home, or "an exile," either to New England, or Holland. It so happened that the tide of emigration in the former direction was checked about the period of their removal, compelling them to withdraw to a nearer distance. To those who are curious in tracing the ways of God's providence, there is something interesting in this circumstance. The same proclamation and order in council that prevented Hampden, Cromwell, and other statesmen, from leaving the country (if they had thought of doing so), when their services were needed for civil purposes, prevented the five dissenting brethren from settling down in New England, never more to trouble themselves with the religious condition of their native land. In Holland, besides having an opportunity of learning, in some measure, the principles of church polity, they could not settle down for life, because they were amongst strangers; in Holland they were within call when their country had need of them, to occupy that place in the assembly of divines which prevented the presbyterians from assuming the authority, and occupying the place, by means of which the episcopalians before them had inflicted so much injury upon the nation.

It must not be supposed, however, that these men were the leaders of the Independents at the present time. They were in fact only scholars: other men in various parts of England were a long way in advance of them. There is abundant evidence to prove that in several counties the successors of the Brownists

still flourished. In London there were congregations of separatists, baptist and pædo-baptist, holding their meetings in secret. In Kent, in Norfolk, in Gloucestershire, and in Wales, there were many who followed the Congregational system, under forms more or less perfectly developed. It was the custom of many to assemble together in private houses, and read over the notes of such sermons as had been used by the faithful ministers who had been deprived. And, although great vigilance was employed in detecting such parties and bringing them to account before the magistrate for their nonconformity, they managed in innumerable instances to elude their persecutors, and to keep alive the spirit of a pure and undefiled religion. If the result of this unnatural state of things was that many, in the succeeding season of freedom, fell into various extremes of sectarian peculiarity, who is to bear the blame but those who after driving the best portion, both of the clergy and their flocks, out of the country, still sought to persecute the scattered remainder, and to leave them without judicious leaders, as sheep without a shepherd?

There are some remarkable examples of fidelity to principle and of successful persistance in a conscientious course, in the records of this period. In South Wales and Bristol there were numbers of devoted Christians, whose polity was formed on Independent principles.* Mr. Wroth, an eminently useful minister of the gospel, appears to have been a kind of centre of holy influence for the benefit of those parts. He had been educated at Oxford, and became the rector of Llanvaches, in Monmouthshire, during the

* We are chiefly indebted to the Broadmead Records for the following account of Wales and Bristol at this time.

reign of James the First. In 1620, the death of a beloved friend was the means of either kindling or reviving in him the spirit of an earnest and practical piety; and from that time he gave himself with great success to the ministry of the Word. He was so powerful and successful in his ministry, and so exemplary in his life, that he was called "the Apostle of Wales." In 1634-5 he was brought before the High Commission for refusing to read the Book of Sports. Whether he was deprived we have not ascertained; but it appears that soon after this he became a staunch Independent, after the "New England way," and formed a church at Llanvaches, "which afterwards was like Antioch, the mother church in that Gentile country, being very famous for her officers, members, orders, and gifts."

This was probably the first Independent church ever formed in Wales. Penry had done much good by his brief period of service in that much neglected country; but the course of affairs in after years, and the persecution which fell on all devout men, scattered the few that had been brought to the knowledge of the truth, until this season of revival arrived.* Many "holy and powerful ministers and preachers were raised up in and about this time," and many churches were formed in successive years. This mother church was composed of enlightened and consistent members who rightly appreciated the ends of Christian fellowship. They were "for free communion, uniting saints as saints." Such was their catholicity that their church was composed of baptists and pædo-

* In some parts we find traces of some "ancient followers of the ministry of the word," more especially in Flintshire. Possibly, these were indebted to Penry for this distinction.

baptists, without disparagement of the peculiarities of either, and while one of their ministers, Mr. Wroth, was a pædo-baptist, the other, Mr. William Thomas, was a baptist. This practice seems to have prevailed for some time in many parts of Wales. In most of the counties, Independent churches were formed either at or soon after this period; and in nearly every instance baptist and pædo-baptist were found uniting together with perfect confidence.* Such a fact is worthy of being commemorated. When we remember how much the sectarianism of that period has been spoken against, let us not forget that amongst the Welsh Christians of that day there was an exemplification of union and charity between two parties somewhat notorious in later years for their alienation, which serves in some measure to rebut the charge, and even to suggest some salutary questions respecting the relative position of the same parties in modern times. It is also worthy of consideration whether this union of baptist and pædo-baptist, in so many instances, is not a proof that the baptist churches of that and succeeding periods were formed, not after a distinctive type, as some have endeavoured to make it out, but after the same type as that of the Independent churches from which they generally sprung." †

Besides Mr. Wroth, there were several devoted men whose zealous labours deserve to be mentioned, namely, Mr. Walter Cradock, a Welshman, deprived in 1634, and who after assisting in the formation of the church

* See the account of Mr. Henry Morris, or Maurice, in the Addenda to the Broadmead Records, pp. 511—518.

† Smyth and Helwisse and their followers came out of Johnson's church; and the earliest baptist churches in London were formed of *secessions* from Independent churches.

at Llanvaches,* laid the foundations of the first Independent churches at Wrexham and Llanfair; Mr. Symonds, who preached in Shrewsbury or its neighbourhood, and, like Mr. Cradock, was "persecuted by the bishops," according to the testimony of Richard Baxter, who became acquainted with them in his twentieth year and sympathized with them in their sufferings; † Mr. Henry Walter, who formed the first Independent church at Newport and Mynydd-ystlwyn, in Monmouthshire; and Mr. Moston, "a man of great abilities, and highly esteemed as a minister of God's Word." All of these and some others were of great service in the principality and the neighbouring counties of England, more especially in Bristol and its neighbourhood, where they were known and welcomed as "the reforming ministers of South Wales."

The manner in which the truth was maintained and perpetuated from generation to generation in the last named city, is deeply interesting in itself, and an exemplification of the course of events in many other cities and towns of England. If the records of other churches had been composed and preserved with as much care as those of the Broadmead church, we should have had ample materials for tracing in every district those remarkable conservative processes by which the providence of God preserved the "remnant of his people" in times of abounding error and per-

* Mr. Henry Jesse, successor to Lathorp, also assisted on that occasion.

† Orme's life of Baxter, i. 21. Mr. Symonds was a great advocate for perfect liberty of conscience. He and Cradock were colleagues at Allhallows, London, at the commencement of the civil war. The latter, also, procured the translation of the New Testament into the Welsh language.

secution, until the period of enfranchisement arrived.

It appears that a Mr. Yeamans, a zealous clergyman of St. Philip's parish, was enabled to "keep in his place" for about twenty years, during the reigns of James and Charles. While other puritan ministers were suspended or deprived, he was favoured, in a manner somewhat difficult to explain, with an exemption from the penalties generally inflicted upon the nonconforming clergy. According to indubitable testimony he was a pious and laborious minister, "one that feared the Lord above many," and highly esteemed by the most consistent puritans of his parish, even such as would have been termed Brownists by their persecuting foes. Some of the forms of the church of England he "did observe according to the time that then was;" but, we are told, he "would not suffer any of his hearers to use any blind devotion, as bowing at the name of Jesus, and ignorant or rather customary walking and profaning of the Sabbath." The people flocked in great numbers to hear him, and many were converted under his ministry. It appears also that, besides refusing to conform to what he deemed unscriptural ceremonies, Mr. Yeamans encouraged such as were "honest-minded" and "awakened" amongst his parishioners, to meet in private houses, for purposes of Christian fellowship and devotion; joining them himself as their pastor and leader, and lending his sanction to their uncanonical proceedings. "One William Listun's house, a glover, near Lawford's Gate," and "one Richard Langford's house, a house-carpenter, in the Castle," are mentioned as the chief places of resort. At these houses they were accustomed to keep "many fast days together," and "did cry day and

night to the Lord, to pluck down the lordly prelates of the time, and the superstitions thereof." No doubt the bishop of the diocese would not be forgotten at such seasons; since, in 1631, he issued articles of inquiry, which had pointed reference to them. Amongst these articles were the following:—Whether Sundays and holy days are kept according to the Book of Common Prayer; whether the householders, or some one of their families, attend the church on Wednesdays and Fridays; whether they bow or kneel at the mention of the name of Jesus; whether any use his manual craft on holy days, especially during divine service; whether schismatics are admitted to communion; whether any married women refuse to come to church after confinement; whether there are any private assemblies, or conventicles, in the parish; whether there be any that come to hear sermons, but not common prayer; whether any impugn the ceremonies, the articles of religion, and speak against them. On all these points, excepting that which relates to the articles of religion, these parties would have been found defaulters. They kept the Sundays most religiously, although not according to the Book of Common Prayer; but the holy days and ceremonies they generally regarded as an imposition of man's device.

One of their number, a widow of the name of Kelly, afterwards married to a clergyman of the name of Hazzard, exhibited remarkable courage in resisting these, and other parts of the bishop's requirements. Probably some would deem her an enthusiast and a fanatic. For ourselves, we must confess we have seldom, if ever, read of a more heroic soul. During her husband's life,—a man of eminent godliness, and a

"ripe professor,"—she appears to have conducted herself with great meekness and retirement. But after his death, she acted her part as the surviving head of her household with all the intrepidity needful in such a period. The testimony borne to her character is of the highest kind. "All the city knew her to be a virtuous woman." She was "very famous for piety and reformation, well known to all, bearing a living testimony against the superstitions and traditions of those days, and she would not observe their invented times and feasts, called holy days." As a specimen of her daring, it is recorded that she refused to close her shop, which was situate in a very public part of the city, "on the time they called Christmas Day;" but kept it open for customers as usual. She went further than this; for there she might be seen, at such a season, busily plying her needle, "as a witness for God in the midst of the city, in the face of the sun, and in the sight of all men; even in those days of darkness when, as it were, all sorts of people had a reverence of that particular day above all others." * Such an example emboldened many of her sex to imitate her example, and we have from time

* Broadmead Records, p. 10. At a later period, this remarkable woman evinced her courage in a season of public danger, when the king's forces besieged Bristol in 1643. Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes was tried by a council of war, for surrendering the city to Prince Rupert. At the trial, Mrs. Hazzard, or Hassard, as her name is spelt in the document, gave the following evidence, which proves that the women of Bristol had more heroism than the men :—

"I, Dorathy Hassard, do testify upon my oath, that I was in the said city during the late siege thereof, when Colonell Nathaniel Fiennes was governor there, and that I did send into the Castle of Bristoll, during the siege thereof, above three months' provision

to time signal proofs that Bristol was blessed with "devout women not a few," whose faith could endure the heaviest afflictions.

Mrs. Kelly was "the first woman" in Bristol "that practised that truth of the Lord, which was then hated and odious, namely, separation." After Mr. Yeamans's death in 1633, the little band of professors had been very much scattered. They knew not "where to hear." Now and then Mr. Wroth, and the Welch ministers whose names have been mentioned, rendered them assistance by coming over and preaching in the parish churches, or "public places," as they were then called. But persecution became more violent,

for our family there, and a great part of our estate, hoping the same would be there preserved, and the castle defended to the utmost, according to divers promises by the governor to defend the same, as we were informed by divers of our friends: and that when the news came into the sayd city on the Wednesday morning, that some of the enemies were entred within the line, *this deponent with divers other women, and maydes,* with the helpe of some men, did, with wool-sacks and earth, stop up Froome Gate, to keep out the enemy from entring into the sayd city, being the only passage by which the enemy must enter, and when they had so done, they, *the sayd women, went to the governor* (this deponent being one of them), and told them that *if they would stand out and fight, they would stand by them,* and told them that they should not want for provision; during which time the said governor treated with the enemies, and beyond their expectation, yielded up the said city and castle to them (to her great griefe and discontent), before the time agreed on, whereby all her goods in the said castle were lost, and seized on by the enemy."

Poor Colonel Nathaniel Fiennes! The above is cited in the Addenda to Broadmead Records, from "A True and Full Relation of the Prosecution, Arraignment, Tryall, and Condemnation of Nathaniel Fiennes. By William Prynne and Clement Walker, Esqs." 1644.

and many were driven to New England. During this time, Mrs. Kelly and those who remained met together as privately as they could in one another's houses; repeated sermon notes; kept long vigils for days together; in such acts became "more humble and spiritual," more "resolved for God, heaven, and eternal happiness;" and instead of yielding as times grew worse, grew stronger in the midst of advancing corruptions, and more resolute "for the worship of God according to the holy Scriptures." They became in fact, by their very persistance, numerous. They were as "a city set upon a hill," that could not be hid, and a centre of attraction for all the truly virtuous. Sometimes they suffered much. Now the bishops turned oppressors, and now the rabble, and now the magistrates. But they persevered; they kept the faith through evil as well as through good report; and in due season Independency, both of a baptist and pædo-baptist form, flourished in that ancient city.

When Mrs. Kelly became Mrs. Hazzard, she still kept her house in High Street, where she had a shop. Mr. Hazzard was appointed to St. Ewin's parish, and officiated in the "public place." There was a parsonage house, however, which they used "only on Lord's days." In this house, the clergyman and his wife entertained sometimes "two or three families together," of such as were on their way from that port to New England. This is an interesting example of the sympathy which existed between some of the partially conforming clergy and the emigrants. Few parsonage houses can boast of such associations. There many a weary pilgrim found rest. There many a persecuted family, cast out from house and home, found comfort and cheering Christian intercourse,

while the ship that was to convey them across the waste of waters was making ready, or waited for the favouring wind. A yet more remarkable interest however is attached to that "little house," from a circumstance which Christian women of later and better times will be able to appreciate. We give the fact in the words of those who could vouch for it:—"At other times, several good women would come out of other parishes, to be brought to bed there at their time of lying-in, to be in Mr. Hazzard's parish, to avoid the ceremonies of their churching, the cross, and other impositions that most of the parsons of other parishes did burden them withal."* Seldom have such sacrifices as are implied in this statement been endured by Christian women. We want no other proof of the conscientiousness of those who at this period professed to have received "the truth as it is in Jesus." While other cities and towns of England are chiefly indebted to *men* for the early advocacy of just and scriptural principles, the people of Bristol are bound never to forget that the principal pioneers of their liberties,—illustrious too, and worthy of all honour from a grateful posterity,—were raised up amongst those of the other sex.

The case we have been considering is one of the earliest examples on record of the kind of double relation which a parochial clergyman sometimes sustained: legally, the minister of the parish; and yet practically separated from his own system, and presiding over the select few who received the gospel in the love of it. The private assembly was virtually an

* Broadmead Records, p. 15.

Independent church, although destitute of many of the privileges which such a society ought to enjoy. The clergyman in this narrowed sphere of duty held an *imperium in imperio;* but it was only by the election or choice of "the godly professors" that he obtained it. The association was voluntary. The fellowship was spiritual. Undoubtedly it was an "irregular" mode of proceeding; the constitution of the dominant church made no provision for it, and the law, if law it could be called, forbade it. Neither was it, under any view, so consistent as the separatist mode of procedure. It was neither more nor less than the result of that compulsory system under which the nation groaned; and hence it retained its hold upon many, for a long time after the originating, if not justifying cause had ceased.

In drawing our review of this period to a close, it would be instructive to take the retrospect of the growing influence, which the oppressive measures of Archbishop Laud and his coadjutors gave to the principles and practices of the puritans of all classes. In so doing, we should see how the gathering darkness of the heavens betokened the presence of hidden elements, ready to burst forth with irresistible energy; and how assuredly, amidst the increasing gloom, an almighty hand was preparing a way for the light. We reserve this, however, for a more appropriate place in the ensuing chapter, and hasten to narrate, as briefly as possible, the events which led to what has been termed the Long Parliament.

The more immediate cause of the change in the king's mind in reference to calling a parliament, was the war with Scotland, brought about by his own despotic interference with the religion of the people

of that country. The measures to which we have already adverted, and which, according to Queen Henrietta, were intended to be the introduction of popery into the kingdom at large, were thus retributively overruled to the embarrassment of the king and his advisers, in the first instance, and afterwards to the summoning of that assembly which became the instrument of inflicting terrible punishment on the principal evil doers. Never were tyrants more effectually caught in their own snare. Notwithstanding the unsuccessful attempt of 1637 Laud persisted in endeavouring to enforce his pet liturgy on the Scotch people, and provoked resistance of a most determined kind. In October, a sudden rising in many parts of the kingdom brought an immense multitude to Edinburgh, to protest against the innovations upon their worship. They drew up an accusation of tyranny and idolatry against the bishops, and although ordered to repair to their homes by royal proclamation, returned again in a short time in augmented numbers, to organize a system of resistance. The king forbade their assembling, under penalty of treason, and removed the session from Edinburgh to Linlithgow, and from Linlithgow to Sterling. But these and other measures were alike in vain. The people were bent upon their object, and carried their point. In February, 1638, the Committee of Four Tables, or Orders, was formed, comprising the four classes of lords, gentlemen, ministers, and burgesses, with sub-committees under them, and governed by a general Table, having supreme executive power. In March, they entered into a league, known as the solemn league and covenant, which bound them by a national oath to defend the religion, laws, and liberties of the country against

all innovators and aggressors. The covenant was no sooner framed than it was received every where with transport. Carried with rapidity by special messengers from town to town, and village to village, it was received all over the country with perfect enthusiasm. The gentry, the clergy, the citizens, the labourers, and even the highlanders, all assembled in crowds, in the churches or in the streets, to swear fealty to it. It was evident that no power of persuasion could alter the determination of the Scotch people; it was also evident, that they were not to be over-reached by cunning.

Charles was taken by surprise at this universal spirit of disobedience. He had anticipated some difficulty in accomplishing his purpose; but was not prepared for this. In a moment of infatuation he determined to have recourse to force. No sooner was this suspected than the covenanters determined to follow the same policy. At first, however, they made an imposing display of their numbers, as if to give their adversaries warning of what they might expect. Twenty thousand, therefore, assembled in Edinburgh to keep a solemn fast, at the time when Hamilton, the king's commissioner, was sent to meet them, and argue them into conformity. Unexpected proposals were made on the part of the commissioner, which deceived them for a time, and gave them great hopes of a peaceful triumph. But both the commissioner and his royal master played false. It was never intended that any thing should be conceded. By the close of the year 1638, the covenanters had determined to provide the means of self-defence. As soon as the court in London received the news respecting the determination of the Scotch people, they ridiculed the

very idea of going to war with such insurgents; but prepared for it nevertheless. On the 16th of January, 1639, the king announced his purpose of marching in person against the Scots, and appointed Selby in Yorkshire as the place of rendezvous. On the 27th of March he left London, and on the 30th he entered York, where he took up his head quarters. He was received with great pomp by the corporation; lords and gentlemen flocked to his standard; and the ancient city presented a spectacle never witnessed before or after. The encampment was better fitted for a display of tourney or a festival, than for the serious business of war. Although multitudes of loyal subjects, lords and commoners, had obeyed the summons to proceed to York, there were not a few who complied with reluctance, and in the hope that matters might be amicably settled with the Scots; and when war actually commenced, it was palpable enough that there was great hesitation on the part of the soldiers in respect to their duty. Their loyalty had many a severe conflict with their better judgment and their charity. It was regarded by many as "a bishops' war;" * and on their march through England northwards, innumerable rumours and reports reached them, calculated to work either upon their sympathies or their fears. King Charles felt this, and required of his chief officers and other distinguished personages an oath of fidelity embracing many particulars. Lords Say and Brooke refused to take this oath, chiefly on conscientious grounds. It required them to avouch their abhorrence of the Scots' religion, which they could not do. Although Independents, they preferred the presbyterian polity to episcopacy;

* Even Pierce, of Bath and Wells, so designated it.

while in the doctrines of the kirk party they entirely agreed. In consequence of this decided step they were placed under arrest, and finally dismissed to their homes.

It is unnecessary to relate the particulars of the several rencontres which ensued between the king's army, under the Earl of Holland, and the Scots' army, under Leslie. Suffice it to say, that all the valour was on the side of the latter; and that the pacification of Berwick was a convincing proof that greater resources were needful in order to the subjugation of the Scotch people.

Charles had entered upon a war without counting the cost. His honour, however, was at stake, and he must persevere. In order to provide supplies, he levied taxes in the shape of ship-money, monopolies, and forced loans of various descriptions. But the result was totally inadequate. The English people, in general, were averse to the designs of their monarch; and many of them, especially the puritans of all classes, sympathized with their oppressed brethren in Scotland. Not even the example of Wentworth, now Earl of Strafford, who obtained four subsidies from the Irish parliament, and lent twenty thousand pounds himself, was sufficiently stimulating to raise up imitators to any considerable extent. Hence it became necessary, after twelve years of unconstitutional government, to call a parliament.

On the 13th of April, 1640, parliament was opened by Charles in person. It was short-lived. The king had called it for his own convenience; to obtain an abundant supply of money; and as if in perfect forgetfulness of all the wrongs under which the people had laboured during so many years of misrule. On

the Commons persisting in the discussion of grievances, it was dissolved, and three of their number committed to the Tower.* This step has generally been considered a fatal error. The king himself, it appears, so regarded it, almost as soon as it had been taken. Some parties, however, have viewed it in a different light. It afforded a little breathing time to the representatives of the people, unaccustomed as they had been for a long period to parliamentary business, and gave them a further opportunity of observing the temper of the king and his advisers. Regarded in this aspect, it was no unimportant preparative for the next parliament, whose members might perhaps take some early precautions against being so suddenly dissolved again. Meanwhile the war with Scotland went on. Some three hundred thousand pounds had been scraped together by Charles, and Strafford went to the seat of war, in the name of his royal master, to see how far his "thorough system" might be carried out against the rebels. It proved a complete failure. The Scots invaded England,† instead of the English invading Scotland; the discipline of Leslie, combined with the religious enthusiasm of his army, was more than a match for the motley and half-hearted recruits of Strafford and Conway; Colonel Lunsford's division fell to pieces on

* During this parliament the Convocation of the church of England was held, according to custom, and passed seventeen new canons, the fifth of which was directed against "all anabaptists, Brownists, separatists, familists, or other sect or sects." In consequence of its prolonging its session after parliament had been dissolved, it became very obnoxious to the people. The famous *et cetera* oath was instituted by this convocation.

† On the 20th of August; issuing at the same time a manifesto in justification of their conduct and views. Rushworth, iii. 1223.

the first advance of the covenanters; the Tyne was forded; and, while the two commanders of the English forces were deliberating, the Scotch troops entered Newcastle without resistance. The dishonour attending this and the subsequent successes of the despised covenanters led, first to the convocation of the great council of the nation at York, on the 24th of September, and afterwards to that of the Long Parliament, on the 3rd of the ensuing November.

It was thought by some parties a somewhat ominous circumstance, that the day fixed upon for the meeting of parliament was the same day as that on which, many years before, the parliament which humbled Cardinal Wolsey, and destroyed the monasteries, had assembled in the time of Henry the Eighth. But it was left to time, and the shaping of events, to determine how far such fears were well founded.

CHAPTER VI.

INDEPENDENCY DURING THE EARLY PERIOD OF THE LONG PARLIAMENT. 1640—1642.

So much has been written, on all sides, respecting the character and proceedings of the parliament now summoned by Charles, that the reader of history is in danger of parting with his better judgment in the haze of conflicting opinions, and of coming to the conclusion that no very certain result can be arrived at. The end we propose, however, is more simple than that of the general historian. Having our own fixed opinions, respecting a fully developed system of Independency, we have to apply them as a test to the conduct of the several parties who now appear as the advocates of that system, and to the progress of events, as they may seem to be affected by its rising influence, or as they may give it a peculiar modification. We do not propose to occupy the place of the annalist, any further than is necessary to the satisfactory elucidation of our subject. Were we reviewing this period as patriots, or for the purpose of tracing the development of the constitution, we should enter into many details that do not properly come under our notice in this portion of our subject. At the same time, the course we propose to follow may conduce, in some measure, to the better understanding of some of the passages in this difficult chapter of British history.

As soon as the parliament had assembled on the day appointed, it was evident that a new era had opened on the nation. The difficulties of the king on

the one hand, and the exasperation of the people on the other, had made a virtual transfer of power from the monarch to the Commons. It is reported, that never had the faces of the latter worn so proud an aspect in the presence of the sovereign, as on that occasion. The danger to be feared was, lest the sudden transition from despotic to popular government might induce results detrimental to the public welfare. Considering the remarkable circumstances under which parliament had assembled—more especially the pressure from without, which has not been sufficiently estimated by some writers—it appears to us deserving of all praise, for the calm and dignified manner in which it conducted its proceedings. Theirs was indeed a difficult task. With two opposing armies in the kingdom—with an express command from the king to render prompt assistance in driving out the Scotch rebels—with an angry people, complaining of oppression and demanding justice from their representatives—the wonder is that they knew which way to turn first. They had, however, the gift of a singular discretion, and their promptitude in action was equalled only by their intrepidity in decision. Attention was first paid to matters of grievance. The table of the House groaned under the petitions presented by the people. The whole country seemed suddenly to have recovered the faculty of speech, and the complaints of all classes were enunciated through the lips of the several delegates. One act of injustice after another, in rapid succession, passed in review; and all were condemned. Parliament became in fact a court of assize for the whole nation. At least forty committees were busily engaged, from day to day, in inquiring into abuses. Every town and district sent up

its accusations. Every agent of injustice was marked down as a delinquent. The scene presented was that of a kind of rehearsal of the general judgment. While despotism in all its processes—its ministers, its tribunals, its laws, its worship—was everywhere paralyzed, the course of retributive justice was marked by amazing activity. Strafford and Laud were impeached as the greatest of delinquents, and eventually executed. The Star Chamber and High Commission courts were abolished. Informations were lodged against bishops Wren and Pierce, who were ordered to give security in ten thousand pounds, to await the judgment of parliament. The judges who had lent their sanction to the levying of ship-money were held to bail in the same amount. The most guilty of their number was impeached, arrested publicly on the bench, and brought to the bar of the House like a common felon. In addition to these things, the parliament ensured its own safety, by voting first, the Triennial Bill, and afterwards, that no power might dissolve it without its consent.

Such bold proceedings as these struck terror into the hearts of all oppressors. The court was given up to dismay. The queen would have left the kingdom—under plea of ill health, but really for the purpose of procuring foreign aid—if the parliament had not requested her to remain. Charles had not, in the number of his counsellors, any that were able or influential enough to direct him aright. Now yielding to unmanly fears, and now endeavouring to outwit the nation by cunning, he became more and more involved in perplexity. The English army was disbanding; and the Scotch army, paid off by the Commons, had crossed the border on its way home. The king

followed them; dined with Leslie at the head quarters of the covenanters; and sought to ingratiate himself in Edinburgh with the people whom he had a little while ago ridiculed and insulted. While there he was suspected of intriguing with various parties for the recovery of his power; and during the excitement arising from this circumstance, news arrived from Ireland of an universal insurrection in that country on the part of the catholics, and the subsequent massacre of the greater part of the protestant population. According to one calculation fifty thousand, and according to another two hundred thousand were cruelly murdered in that dreadful slaughter. As a natural consequence a cry of horror, mingled with fierce denunciations against popery, arose from every part of England. The king was requested to return from Scotland, and on doing so, devolved the work of putting an end to the rebellion in the sister country upon parliament. Parliament attempted to do what it could, but effected little. It was bent now upon decisive measures against the king, who was more than suspected of having complotted with O'Neil in the scheme which led to so much bloodshed. The famous Remonstrance against the past delinquencies of the king and his agents, civil and ecclesiastical, was passed, and presented to his majesty on the 1st of December, 1641, at Hampton Court. At the same time a petition for the removal of the bishops from the House of Lords was placed in his hands. Charles received both with reluctance, and with the air of a man who had some secret project in hand. It was evident that a collision between the king and his parliament was about to be commenced.

Such, in brief, was the course of public affairs up to

the year 1642. It now devolves upon us to inquire into the relative influence of the various religious parties both in and out of parliament.

According to Clarendon, nearly all the members of both houses were episcopalians, and in favour of the existing constitution in church and state. The popular leaders, in particular, are referred to by name, as of this class; and their reforming views are said to have gone no further at first than to a removal of abuses, and the redress of grievances. Such a statement is scarcely correct. Many were already presbyterians in principle; and while the Independents had at present no recognized existence as a political party, their numbers were increasing, and principles to a certain extent identical with theirs were taking possession of the public mind. As a contemporary writer has observed, with great discrimination, "the concord of this parliament consisted not in the unanimity of the persons, (for they were of several tempers as to matters of religion), but in the complication of the interest of those causes which they severally did most concern themselves in. One party made no great matter of the alterations in the church; but they said, that if the parliaments were once down, and our propriety gone, and arbitrary government set up, and law subjected to the prince's will, we were then all slaves, and this they made a thing intolerable, for the remedying of which, they said every true Englishman could think no price too dear; these the people called good commonwealth's men. The other sort were the more religious men, who were *also* sensible of all these things, but were *much more* sensible of the interests of religion."* It

* Sylvester's Baxter, 17.

should be added, in order to throw yet further light upon the complexion of the House of Commons, and to account in some measure for the rapid advances which many if not most of its members made in opinions hostile to the established hierarchy, that the elections had proceeded in most instances, solely on parliamentary grounds, in opposition to privilege, by which so many previous parliaments had been rendered inefficient. Hence the "representation" of the religion of the people, which in the beginning was rather a matter of chance than otherwise, was afterwards improved by that pressure from without, which will always affect, sooner or later, the character of an elective assembly. From the commencement of this parliament, however, there were men of great parts whose views were more or less formed according to the principles of Independency, and who became in fact the nucleus of the Independent party. Lords Brooke and Say, in the upper house, and Hampden, Vane, Cromwell, and St. John, in the lower, were the few who were thus honourably distinguished. A few remarks will not be out of place here, respecting the character of these men.

The most celebrated person in the House of Commons at this time was John Hampden, a gentleman of ancient family and large estate in Buckinghamshire,* whose public spirit was sustained by his lofty principles and by his unblemished character in private life. It has been somewhere observed, that the old Roman character in its purest form was represented anew to the world in his person. Such is the idea history compels us to form of him; only heightened

* Hampden was born in London, in 1594, when his father was in parliament.

by the charms of that christian virtue which the mythology of Rome could never have produced. His high-minded patriotism in resisting the enforcement of ship-money, when the payment demanded of him was only a few shillings, has had its influence in every succeeding period, in directing the public mind to distinguish between the principle and the degrees of injustice; while the inflexible purpose and unwearied perseverance with which he prosecuted his own defence, fearless of consequences so far as he was personally concerned, and reckless of expense in a matter in which the liberties of the country were involved, made him the idol of his own age, and the glory of those succeeding. When he entered the House of Commons, he entered as the representative of all England, and the only man who rivalled him in popularity was his brave friend and coadjutor, Pym. Some doubt has been entertained respecting the religious party to which Hampden belonged, in consequence of his death happening at an early period of the civil war, before the Independent party had actually been formed. There can be little question, however, that his views harmonized more completely with those of the Independents than of any other religious body. The statement of Clarendon, to the effect that "his dislike was rather to some churchmen, than to the ecclesiastical government of the church," when contrasted with the decided terms in which he speaks of other members of the House, is in itself sufficient to confirm the judgment of Lord Nugent and others, who place him in the same class with Cromwell and the Independents. Moreover, his choicest associations were with individuals holding the views under consideration.

Vane, afterwards Sir Harry Vane, was at this time known as a man of consummate genius and indubitable courage. He had fled from England in 1635, in his twentieth year, abandoning all his prospects at court, in order to enjoy liberty of conscience in Massachussets. He took up his residence at Salem, with Mr. Cotton, one of the most celebrated controversialists, and in his day the most eminent minister, of New England. There he was initiated into all the views of the Congregational Independents, and became enamoured of theological studies. He was in all probability a hyper-Calvinist in doctrinal sentiment, and an ultra in politics. The movement party in Massachussets elected him governor of their colony, in his twenty-fourth year; but in consequence of the protection which he afforded to certain parties obnoxious to the elder settlers on account of their alleged heresies, he was supplanted by Governor Winthrop, and returned to England in time to be chosen a member of the Long Parliament.* He took a prominent part in conducting the impeachment of Strafford, and was the means of procuring an important document that decided his fate. In all matters pertaining to liberty of conscience, he was regarded as a popular leader, and by his unswerving integrity and patriotic ardour, no less than by his brilliant talents, secured the esteem of the chief men in the kingdom. Baxter has spoken somewhat contemptuously of him; but Baxter never knew his own mind, and therefore was not likely to appreciate a man as remarkable for consistency as he was for the want of it.† The following

* Murray's United States, i. 211, 212.

† Orme's Life of Baxter, i. 106—111. In the first edition of "The Saints' Everlasting Rest," Baxter mentioned the names of

sonnet, addressed to him by our great poet, who had ample opportunities of observing his character, is sufficient to refute a host of calumnies, and will hand down his unsullied fame to the remotest posterity:—

"Vane, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns not arms repelled
The fierce Epirot and the African bold,
Whether to settle peace or to unfold
The drift of hollow states hard to be spelled,
Then to advise how war may, best upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage: besides to know
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learnt, which few have done:
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son." *

Oliver Cromwell was at this time rising into notice. His quick discernment, well poised judgment, and promptitude of action, had already secured the attention of his cousin Hampden and some other observant members of the House. When the famous Remonstrance, in which he was deeply interested, was passed on the 22nd of November 1641, after the longest and stormiest debate ever yet known in parliament, he is reported to have said that, "if it had not been carried,

Pym, Hampden and Brooke, as parties whom he hoped to meet in heaven. But in later editions he struck the passage out, to please the enemies of the puritans.

* Milton's Poetical Works, Hawkins, iv. 204. Vane published "An Earnest Plea for Universal Liberty of Conscience, and against the Magistrates intermeddling with Religion," to which no doubt Milton refers in the last line but two. We have not been able to procure a copy of this work. See Hallam's testimony to Vane's character, in his Const. Hist. ii. 444.

he and many of his friends would have sold all, and gone to New England." The story is scarcely worthy of credence. A man of his sagacity and patriotic spirit would not despair of his country so easily and at such a juncture; when the foe was already in the toils, and it was easy to discern on which side the balance of power lay. At the present period, however, little was said or done by Cromwell, to distinguish him from other patriot members of the House. He acted in concert with Pym and Hampden, Strode and Haselrig, and in consequence of his seldom occupying the time of the House in debate, was regarded rather as a valuable auxiliary than as a leader. Much of that singular energy and promptitude for which this parliament was pre-eminent, is to be attributed to the more unobserved influence of this remarkable man, who in all that he undertook appeared as the very impersonation of the genius of action.

Oliver St. John was a much more celebrated character than either Cromwell or Vane at this time. He had become obnoxious to Laud and the court party by the legal advice he had proffered to the three martyrs of the pillory, whose case we have narrated; and in conducting Hampden's cause in 1637, he had rendered himself almost as famous as the great patriot himself. His skilful management of his client's case secured him a high place in the House amongst the popular leaders; so much so, that when the king sought in 1641 to make a compromise with that party, he appointed him solicitor general. St. John accepted the appointment, but was in no way influenced by it in the performance of his public duty. In conducting Strafford's impeachment, and supporting the Remonstrance, he appears to have been actuated by the greatest integrity of purpose, as well as by a "sincere

conviction that no confidence could ever be placed in Charles."* St. John's second wife was a cousin of Cromwell's; a most excellent woman, to whom he confided much pertaining to his religious experience. This family connexion between three such men as Hampden, Cromwell, and St. John, did much to draw them together in well concerted action, and at a later period they proved the centre of influence for the best portion of the liberal party.

In the upper house Lords Brooke and Say must have had great influence, notwithstanding the extreme views they were thought to hold, in ecclesiastical matters. Their well known integrity and purity of character shielded them from many of the calumnies to which they were exposed on account of their principles. They generally acted together on all important matters, and were looked upon by the leaders of the Commons as amongst the brightest ornaments of the upper house.

Robert Lord Brooke, the second of that title, was the son of the celebrated nobleman who had inscribed on his tomb-stone, in Warwick Church, the brief but noble epitaph: "Fulke Greville, servant to Queen Elizabeth, Counsellor to King James, and friend to Sir Philip Sidney." It is not unlikely, that the first Lord Brooke derived some knowledge of the principles of Congregationalism from the first settlers of New Plymouth, with whose agent he had some interviews, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, when they went over from Leyden to London, in order to procure their patent.† Whether he assented to those

* Hallam's Const. Hist. ii. 165, 166.

† Young's Chronicles, p. 67. The first Lord Brooke was raised to the peerage in 1621, and wrote a life of Sir Philip Sidney, as well as a history of "The first five years of King James."

principles himself cannot be ascertained with much certainty; but the circumstance we have mentioned, taken in connexion with the fact that several members of the aristocracy, intimate friends of that noble family, had embraced them, and even emigrated to New England with the earliest pilgrims,* will account for the predilections of the younger Lord Brooke in their favour. At the present period, Lord Brooke was distinguished, not only by his high courage and piety, but by his advocacy of the Congregational system. In 1641, he published a work entitled, "A Discourse opening the nature of that Episcopacy which is Exercised in England. Wherein, with all humility, are represented some considerations tending to the much desired Peace, and long expected Reformation, of this our Mother Church." From the latter part of this title it is evident that he was not a separatist, either in principle or practice; but a follower of "the New England way," or rather, of Jacob and the "rigid Puritans." The chief portion of his treatise is devoted to an elaborate exposition of the evils connected with episcopacy, as developed in the church of England; but he is very explicit in expressing his assent to the views of the Congregational Independents. The following passages confirm this statement.

"To me the word 'bishops' signifies either one that is to preach, administer the sacraments, exhort, reprove, convince, excommunicate, etc.; not only in

* Frances, daughter of the Countess of Lincoln, one of the most remarkable women of her day, married Gorges; and two other daughters, Susan and Arabella, married respectively John Humphrey and Isaac Johnson, two of the principal colonists of Massachussets. Theophilus, the son of the countess, married Bridget, daughter of Lord Say.

some one distinct congregation, his own parish, but in many several congregations crowded up together in one strange, and for long unknown, word, a 'diocese!' Or one who hath to all this added, not only the name of a civil lord,—with which bare name or shadow I fight not,—but also a vast, unwieldy, I had almost said unlimited, power in civil government, which must needs draw on a mighty train, and clothe itself with glorious robes of long extended and magnific styles, scarce to be marshalled by a better herald than Elihu, who could give no 'titles;' Or, in the last place, which should be first, a true, faithful 'overseer,' that over one single congregation hath a joint care with the elders, deacons, and the rest of the assembly, who are fellow-helpers, yea servants, each to other's faith.

"This last is a 'bishop' of the first institution, of Christ's allowance, settled in divers churches, even in the apostles' times. The first is of the second century, when doctrine, discipline, all religion, began to wane; for even then, Mysterious Antichrist was not only conceived, but began to quicken. The second rose last, though first intended by the church's enemy: rising up while the world was busy looking all one way, as amazed at the new Beast, successor to the Dragon. This is now our adversary! One monstrously compounded of different, yea opposite offices; and those the greatest, both ecclesiastical and civil: for which he seems no way able, no way fit; and that for many reasons which may be brought from Scripture, church-antiquity, state-policy."

Again; the following expresses his views on the subject of Congregationalism:—

"Thus, if you will be bound either by text or context, or the common acceptation of the word, in the

Scripture, by 'church' must be understood the whole congregation. Again; for excommunication of members, 1 Cor. v. 13, St. Paul commendeth 'them,'—namely, the whole church,—to 'put away' that wicked person; and, verse 5, 'to deliver up' such a one to Satan, 2 Cor. ii. 6—8; *they* restore him, *they* forgive him.

"Thus we see everywhere, that in election of officers, in decision of controversies, in cases of conscience, in excommunication, the *whole* 'church' disposeth everything,—not the bishops, not the presbyters, alone. I conceive, then, I have clearly and briefly proved these three things: that there is little in Scripture for episcopacy; much less for such an 'episcopacy' as ours; something against them; another government clearly delineated."

The interest taken by Lord Brooke in the separatists, although not a separatist himself, and the thoroughly Christian temper he had obtained, not without going through the necessary processes of a Christian experience, are alike evinced in the following:—

"Before you pass any severe censure, be pleased to hear these poor men you call 'separatists;' know their tenets, and then judge. And I move this the rather because they are still ready to say, most that condemn them never heard them. I could not but do what in me lies to remove this scandal. I most affectionately entreat men not to contemn all things in those they now brand with their usual stain of 'separation,' which phrase many use in scorn, as if with one stab of that Italian dagger, they could run through body and soul at once!

"If God please to communicate himself, in any

manner of sweetness, so that a man begins to see how good communion and acquaintance with God is; how easily it is interrupted by loose walking; how sweet it is, while enjoyed, so that it ravisheth the soul, and filleth the whole heart, that it cannot but flow out at the lips, in sweet breathings of, for, and after God in Christ Jesus; this man is presently stained with a taint of 'madness,' and I know not what 'enthusiasm!' If one that had tasted, and experimentally found, the sweetness of peace of conscience, and knows how impossible it is to keep it, but by close walking with God; how easily it is broken, and how hardly it is made up again, when broken; so that he is content to leave friends, living, liberty, all, rather than to break his peace, wound his conscience, sin against God; in sinning against light, or acting against doubts; O! this man is beyond all rule of reason! he hath a tang of frenzy: one puft up into a sort of self-conceit:—a rank 'separatist!'

"When God shall so enlarge his hand, and unveil his face, that the poor creature is brought into communion and acquaintance with his Creator; steered in all his ways by his Spirit, and by it carried up above shame, fear, pleasure, comfort, losses, grave, and death itself; let us not censure such tempers, but bless God for them: so far as Christ is in us, we shall love, prize, honour Christ, and the least particle of his image in others; for we never prove ourselves true members of Christ more than when we embrace his members with most enlarged, yet straitest affections.

"To this end, God assisting me, my desire, prayer, endeavour, shall still be, as much as in me lies, to follow peace and holiness; and though there may

haply be some little dissent between my dark judgment, weak conscience, and other good men that are much more clear and strong, yet my prayer still shall be, 'to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' And as many as walk after this rule, 'peace' I hope shall still lie on them, and the whole Israel of God."*

The entire work is pervaded by an invincible logic, and evinces not only the severe discipline of mind, common in that day, but also the generous and high-toned sentiments of the noble author. Milton acknowledges his obligations to it, and does not disdain to consider himself one of Lord Brooke's disciples. In his celebrated address to the parliament of England on liberty of unlicensed printing, he thus speaks:—

"I shall only repeat what I have learnt from one of your honourable number, a right noble and pious lord, who, had he not sacrificed his life and fortunes to the church and commonwealth, we had not now missed and bewailed a worthy and undoubted patron of this argument. Ye know him, I am sure; yet I, for honour's sake, and may it be eternal to him, shall name him, the Lord Brooke. He, writing of episcopacy, and by the way treating of sects and schisms, left ye his vote, or rather now the last words of his dying charge, which I know will ever be of dear and honoured regard with ye; so full of meekness and breathing charity, that next to His last testament, who bequeathed love and peace to his disciples, I cannot call to mind where I have read or heard words more mild and peaceful. He there exhorts us to hear with patience and humility those, however they may

* Hanbury, ii. p. 117—130.

be miscalled, that desire to live purely, in such a use of God's ordinances as the best guidance of their conscience gives them, and to tolerate them, though in some disconformity to ourselves. The book itself will tell us more at large, being published to the world, and dedicated to the parliament by him, who, both for his life and for his death, deserves that what advice he left be not laid by without perusal."*

William, Lord Viscount Say and Seale, was a nobleman of kindred spirit with Lord Brooke, of unblemished reputation, and of commanding talents. He received his title from James the First; but was afterwards known as a determined opponent of the court party in all their attempts to subvert the constitution of the country in civil and religious matters. From the intercourse he had with the New England emigrants, and the circumstance of his joining Lord Brooke in the purchase of a large territory in Massachusets, it is probable that he entertained some thoughts of becoming a colonist. Happily, however, his thoughts were diverted from this purpose, and he remained at home to act his part in the Long Parliament. His sympathies were all enlisted on the side of the patriots, and on several occasions he addressed the House. Although he had been appointed by Charles Master of the Wards and Liveries, and a member of the privy council, he was not deterred from the discharge of his duty to a yet higher trust. He opposed the hierarchy with great spirit, as an usurpation over the liberties of the country; and should be gratefully remembered as the advocate of the persecuted Independents, at a time when almost

* Milton's Prose Works, p. 117.

all other peers passed them by without pity, if not with contempt.

The following passage from his speech on the bishops' bill shows what were his views respecting that order of men:—

"I do appeal to all who have been versed in the ancient ecclesiastical stories or modern histories, whether they have not been the common incendiaries of the Christian world: never ceasing from contention, one with another, about the precedency of their sees and churches; excommunicating one another; drawing princes to be parties with them, and thereby casting them into bloody wars. Their ambition, and intermeddling with secular affairs and state-business, have been the cause of shedding more Christian blood than anything else in the Christian world."

It appears that Archbishop Laud had felt himself bound to notice another speech of his on the subject of the liturgy, and in his reply spoke of Lord Say as one of the greatest separatists in England. Lord Say defended himself against the attack of the humbled prelate in a speech of great ability, the conclusion of which is as follows:—

"I say that there is a two-fold separation: one from the universal or catholic church, which can no otherwise be made but by denying the faith; for faith and love are the requisites unto that communion:—the other is a separation from this or that particular church or congregation; and that, not in respect of difference with them in matter of faith and love, but in dislike only of such corruptions in their external worship and liturgies as they do admit of, and would enjoin upon others. This is a separation, not from their persons, as they are Christians; but from their corruptions in

matter of worship, as they are therewith defiled. And this separation every man that will keep himself pure from other men's sins, and not sin against his own conscience, must make. And I will ingenuously confess, that there are many things in many churches or congregations in England, practised; and enjoined upon all to be practised and suffered; which I cannot practise nor admit of—except I should sin against the light of my conscience—until I may, out of the Word of God, be convinced of the lawfulness of them, which hitherto I could never see sufficient ground for.

"But, my Lords, this is so far from making me 'the greatest *separatist* in England,' that it cannot argue me to be any at all! For, my Lords, the bishops do know that those whom they usually apply this term unto, are the 'Brownists,'—as they call them, by another name,—and they know their tenets. The truth is, *they differ from us in no fundamental point of doctrine or saving truth, as I know.* Their failing is in this: they hold that there is no true church 'in England;' no true ministry; no true worship; which depend the one upon the other: they say all is Antichristian! Here is their error: they distinguish not between the *bene esse* or purity of a 'true church,' and the *esse* or true being of it, though with many defects and gross corruptions; but conclude, that because such things are wanting which are indeed necessary to the *well being* of a true church, and to be desired, therefore there is none at all in being!* I hold no such opinion; but do believe to the contrary, that there are 'in England' many true churches; and a true ministry which I do hear; and with which churches I could join in communion, were those yokes of bondage which are laid upon them

taken off, and those corruptions removed, which they do, contrary, as I think, to their duty, yield unto and admit of! And this, I am sure, no 'separatist' in England holdeth, that deserveth that name. Therefore, I hope your lordships will, in that respect, let me stand right in your opinion.

"I shall now end, with two requests;—the one, that your lordships will please to pardon me for troubling you with so long a discourse concerning myself. I have not used it heretofore, and I am not like to offend again in the same kind. It is but once, and your lordships will consider the occasion. The second is, humbly to entreat of you, that where you know there is one and the same God worshipped, one and the same faith embraced, one and the same Spirit working love, and causing an unblameable conversation, without any offence to the state, in your brethren that in all these concur with you, you will not suffer them—for ceremonies, and things to you indifferent, but not to them, but burdens which, without offence to the state, or prejudice to the churches, you may take off if you will,—to be thrust out of the land, and cut off from their native country; for if you thus shall wound the consciences of your brethren, you will certainly offend and sin against Christ." *

Such were the leading Independents in the Long Parliament. Probably some others should be classed with them.† But in consequence of what has already been advanced respecting the circumstances in which parliament was called, it is difficult at this period to draw the exact line between the religious parties

* Hanbury, ii. 131—137.

† For example, Philip Lord Wharton, and Nathaniel Fiennes, son of Lord Say.

in either House. It was needful for the legislation to take a more decidedly ecclesiastical shape before such a distinction could become marked. Moreover, it is likely that many hardly knew their own minds in relation to the several questions of principle and policy that were about to engage their attention, and therefore were open to the conviction which future controversy and debate might produce. It is an error, of no mean importance, to suppose that such an assembly as that which a parliament presents, must needs be divided into its several parties, on all points on which a difference of opinion may arise; especially, if such an assembly is also regarded as a representation of the relative divisions of the nation. Much of the misapprehension that exists in reference to the history of this period, has arisen from this unwarrantable assumption. The surprize so often felt at the remarkable turn of affairs, and at the supposed potency of individual actors on the stage of events, would no longer exist, or at least in a much less degree, if the condition of the people out of parliament were as well understood as that of the members within. Although it is confessedly a difficult matter to ascertain the precise condition of the people at this time, it seems desirable to put together the results of inquiry, more especially in relation to the advancement of principles akin to those of Independency.

As we have already shown in previous chapters, there was at this time a much greater amount of nonconformity in the country at large than has generally been acknowledged. Political wrong had combined with ecclesiastical in producing a strong revulsion in the public mind, directed against the hitherto dominant party and their innovations. The irreligion of

the country was chiefly to be found amongst the aristrocracy, the civil functionaries, and the lowest order of the people. The middle classes were in the main sound at heart. Of this general spirit of nonconformity, so long under repression, a great measure was undefined: rather negative than positive; and though decidedly evangelical as to doctrine, yet destitute of all fixity of principle as to polity. Hence there were multitudes of religious people who waited, so soon as the hierarchical pressure should be removed, for instruction respecting the mode of church government that should be adopted in its stead. Unhappily, as we shall see, the parliament called in what might be termed foreign aid, which instead of leading to the desired result, only confounded the fray, and superinduced an unnatural order of things. The remainder of the nonconforming spirit of the country, however, was of a positive kind, of two classes. The presbyterian element pervaded one half, and the Independent element the other. Probably there were many individuals, usually ranged under one or other of all the three classes we have specified, as well as amongst the hierarchists, who were more or less tinctured with the Erastian spirit. When Archbishop Usher's scheme of a modified episcopacy was canvassed in and out of parliament, its chief supporters were to be found amongst those last mentioned; and at a later period they were of great service in the opposition which they offered, in combination with the Independents, to the headlong measures of the presbyterians. Their great leader, Selden, expressed the views of many of the ablest statesmen and politicians of the day, who looked at questions of church polity rather from a civil than from a religious ground; and their doctrine

had for a long time been growing into favour amongst philosophical and political protestants, of whom Hooker and Grotius were respectively the types.

The presbyterians would not have been so formidable a party at this period, if the war with Scotland and the impolitic conduct of parliament had not made them so. In England they were not so considerable as has been supposed; and their popularity arose from the comprehension of their communion,—which admitted all good citizens, whether scripturally religious or not, to an ecclesiastical standing on the old parochial system,—rather than from any predilection for the subordinating power of their classes and presbyteries. The hereditary clanship of the Scotch prepared them to receive presbyterianism in the first instance, and to retain it afterwards; but the English mind, especially amongst the middle classes, had always shown a preference for the municipal in civil, and the purely congregational in religious polity, as a development of its own love for rational and concientious self-government. No doubt there were many favourers of presbyterianism in the House, and in the pulpits of the establishment; but the former had been elected at a time when undue favour would be shown to such parties on account of the presence of a successful Scotch army in the north, and the latter were in many instances Erastian in practice if not in principle.

Although the Independents were few in parliament, they were a numerous and powerful body in the country. Proscribed and persecuted up to this time, they had learnt to attach that importance to their principles which suffering generally serves to enhance. In the livings of the establishment there were a few of this number; but more in the families of the noble

and wealthy, and still more united as separatists, baptist and pædo-baptist, in various parts of the country. The name of Independent had scarcely become a party name as yet; but the principle of Congregational Independency was well understood.

The scanty records of individual churches that have come down to us, are calculated to mislead the student of history in respect to the number of those who held the principles of Independency. Only a few preserved their church-books, if they were accustomed to keep such records; and the solitary instances which the page of history has preserved, are those which persecution brought to light. How many separatist meetings contrived to escape the vigilance of their persecutors, history does not tell us: and it is only by the researches and inferences of a later period that the truth can be known. It is also probable that multitudes of thoughtful and studious men approved the principles of Independency, who never had the opportunity of practising their principles, until better times arrived. Lord Brooke may have been a member of an Independent church at Warwick, as tradition informs us, and probably some other parties, little suspected in their day of having formed such associations, may have enjoyed similar privileges; but how many could not thus act! Living in retirement, and deriving their views from books, instead of the living voice, they would keep their own secret, until the era of comparative freedom arived; and then to their surprise they would find that the kind of fellowship after which they had been aspiring, had been enjoyed for years in their own town or village, without their being aware of it.

The manner in which Jacob's church comes into

public light, many years after his decease, is a singular confirmation of these remarks. After many migrations from place to place, and many changes of fortune under the successive pastoracies of Lathorp, Canne, Howe and More, it settles at last in Deadman's-place, Southwark, at the house of Richard Sturges, one of the members. The Long Parliament has commenced auspiciously, but does not yet know its own mind in reference to religious liberty. While John Milton is writing his treatise on Reformation in England, and lauding both lords and commons to the skies for what they have already done, he hardly suspects what is going on in their neighbourhood in the first instance, and in their house shortly after. Laud is in the Tower; and probably, like many others, the generous patriot imagines that the reign of tyranny is over. But it is not so yet. The spirit of Laud yet lives in the hearts of constables and church-wardens, who have a secret dread lest their master and whipper-in may break from his durance, and make them pay the penalty for neglect of duty. Besides, the Star Chamber and High Commission, though doomed, are not yet destroyed; and who can tell at present, whether the parliament or these shall obtain the victory in the struggle already commenced? On the 16th of January, therefore, the churchwardens of St. Saviour's take what they deem the wiser course; and repairing with their constables to Deadman's-place, seize whomsoever they can lay hold of, and take them before the marshal of the King's-bench. The marshal receives the charge against them, of violating the law of the 35th of Elizabeth, which requires that they shall go to their parish church and hear Common Prayer. But he condescends to ask them why they refuse to

do so. The principles of these men are given in their reply, recorded in the Lords' Journals:—"They answered, That the 35th Elizabeth was not a true law, for that it was made by the bishops; and that they would not obey it. 2. That they would not go to their parish churches: that those churches were not true churches; and that there was no true church but where the faithful met. 3. That the king could not make a perfect law, for he was not a perfect man. 4. That they ought not to obey him, but in civil things." It is also added, "that some of them threatened the churchwardens and constables, that they had not yet answered for this day's work." They were forthwith committed to the Clink prison. On the 18th of the same month they were brought before the House of Lords, with the marshal, churchwardens, constables, and witnesses, and examined before them. No doubt, Lords Brooke, Say, and Wharton were present, and helped to conduct the examination. Here, then, were men holding principles identical with theirs,—only more consistently carried out,—quite unknown to them, and persecuted under their very eyes. After being admonished, they were released, never to be maltreated again by churchwardens and constables for many a long year.

Probably Lords Say and Brooke hardly knew at this time how far these Christian men, and the "sixty more" with whom they held fellowship, were of their own party; or they might have saved them from the admonition they received. Moreover, the order afterwards passed by the lords—"That the said sectaries should repair to their parish churches, to hear divine service, and to give obedience thereunto, according to the acts of parliament of this realm,"—

seems to confirm us in the opinion, that even the Independents in the House of Lords and Commons at this time, were only Congregational Independents, and did not fully understand the great principle of religious liberty. It is pleasing, however, to find that some of the peers, without doubt these amongst the number, went on the following Sabbath to the place of meeting. Stephen More, their chosen pastor, had the honour of preaching before their lordships, and did not fail to open and expound "those principles for which they had been accused." After this the church celebrated the Lord's Supper, the peers being still present, whether as communicants or spectators we are not informed. If Lord Brooke was already a member of the Independent church at Warwick, there is no difficulty in supposing that he was cordially received to their fellowship; since the rigidness of the separatists and sectaries, as they were called, consisted only in their separating "the precious from the vile."*

The Independents of this, as of former periods, must be regarded as forming two distinct classes; the one comprising those who were generally known as separatists and anabaptists; the other, those who had hitherto been known as rigid puritans, but were now becoming better known as "of the Independent way," or of "the New England way." The former class embraced all the three principles of Independency; the latter were Congregational Independents only. The former would not have the state "meddle" with religion; the latter had not got farther than to the principle that each church or congregation should manage its own affairs, without foreign control either

* Hanbury, ii. 66, 67.

from diocesan bishops or synods. The former did not altogether disapprove of the association of churches for purposes of sympathy and mutual recognition; the latter earnestly desired such association, and would have been willing to come within the operation of a "persuasive synod," formally constituted, for purposes of mutual counsel and order. It is important to bear this distinction in mind, in order to a clear conception of the relative position and progress of parties.

The controversy between the Congregationalists and the presbyterians had been going on for many years before this period, and had turned in a great measure to the advantage of the former. Treatises from New England and Holland had continually been making their way into this country, and were widely circulated. Canne, in particular, had done much service by his various writings, both before and after he adopted the opinions of the baptists.* Many who could not follow him in his separatist principles, yielded conviction to his able expositions of Congregationalism. Notwithstanding the numerical force of the presbyterians in parliament at a later period, we are inclined to think that the Congregationalists had made by far the deepest impression upon the public mind of England in the early period of the Long Parliament, and might have retained their position with increasing power, but for two circumstances. The first of these

* Canne was very busy in Bristol and Wales in 1640-1, and assisted in forming many churches. He returned to Amsterdam in 1641. William Best, in 1635, did great service in his reply to John Paget. Cotton, the friend and adviser of Sir Harry Vane, was continually sending forth his anti-presbyterial missives, to the great annoyance of Baillie, of whom we shall have something to say presently.

was the political predominance of the Scotch interest, occasioned by the peculiar circumstances in which the country was placed; and the second was the accident, if it may be so termed, that the leading Independents in parliament, and in connexion with it, were for the most part of the second class, referred to a little way back as Congregational Independents only.

We shall have occasion to refer more fully in another chapter to the latter circumstance; the former we proceed to illustrate in this connexion.

It is evident from the letters of Robert Baillie, one of the leaders of the Scotch presbyterians, that it was a principal aim of that party to establish their system of ecclesiastical polity in England, as well as in their own country. At first they were satisfied with resisting the attempt of Charles and Laud to enforce a popish episcopacy upon themselves. But no sooner had they succeeded in that, than they became ambitious of effecting more than a merely negative good, according to their view of matters. It appears to have been debated amongst them soon after their army entered Newcastle, in 1640, whether it would not be advisable to make a party with the parliamentarians for this purpose. It was plain enough that the English people were wearied out with the exactions and oppressions of "black prelacy;" and they perhaps were convinced that the time was come for the establishment of that system which they deemed divine, and in defence of which so much enthusiasm had been displayed. Having determined upon this point, they took a survey of the division of parties in England; and came to the conclusion to depute certain of their number, the shrewdest they could select, to repair to London, in order to watch

the movements, and parry the arguments, of those who might be obstacles to their design. The Scots' commissioners were already in London, treating with the leaders of parliament, on civil grounds; and these self-constituted ecclesiastical commissioners might preach before them with great effect, and transact other important business besides. Alexander Henderson, Robert Blair, George Gillespie, and Robert Baillie,—all noted men,—were despatched forthwith on their errand, in hopes that the parliament and people of England might be caught napping. Henderson had the post of honour, as their leader and representative with parliament; Blair was "to satisfy the minds of many in England who loved the Way of New England better than that of presbyteries;" Baillie was to aim at "the convincing of that prevalent faction," the separatists, "against which he had written;" and Gillespie was selected "for the crying down of the English Ceremonies." * Such was the diplomacy of that day. The only part of the arrangement that betrayed a want of sagacity, was that which devolved upon Mr. George Gillespie a task that had been performed to satisfaction already.

From this time it would seem that the presbyterians were bent upon carrying out their plan; and the necessity, under which the parliament felt itself, of paying due, and more than due, deference to the wishes of the Scotch party, both on account of what they had done, and yet might do, in the common cause, rendered it blind to the dangers by which it was beset. The ecclesiastical commissioners played their part well; and were at first very sanguine. "Say and Brooke, in the Higher House, and some leading

* Baillie's Letters and Journals, 18. vol. i. p. 215.

men in the Lower," were the only parties, as they thought, "inclinable to Separation;" and they inferred that, as these members were opposed to the existing establishment, their co-operation might help to "overthrow the Bishops and Ceremonies," and then matters might be more easily settled. When the ground was thus "well swept," they hoped to be able to "build a new house." * Some events happened, however, that they had not anticipated. The vision which their enthusiasm had kindled was not so easily to be realized. Before their designs could be accomplished, some tedious delays and a long campaign awaited them.

In May, 1641, parliament first tried its hand on a piece of ecclesiastical legislation, originating in an alledged discovery of a conspiracy against the parliament and the nation, on the part of the catholics abroad, and the crown. This was entitled "A Protestation to Defend the Protestant Religion expressed in the doctrine of the Church of England." It was the hasty offspring of fear, and led to much division out of the House. Although not intended to uphold episcopacy, many refused to sign it. Henry Burton, lately released from prison,† dealt it a terrible blow

* Baillie, i. 220.

† The three martyrs of the pillory were brought up to London from their respective places of confinement, in November and December, 1640, under warrant of the Speaker of the House of Commons. Many petitions had been sent in, requesting their liberation, two of which came from the wives of Burton and Bastwick. Burton and Prynne arrived together, on Saturday, November 28th; Bastwick, on Monday, December 6th. Though still in custody, their journey was a march of triumph. The streets, in some of the towns through which they passed, were strewed with flowers, and the people spread their garments on their way. When Prynne

by publishing a tract entitled "The Protestation Protested: or, A Short Remonstrance, showing what is principally required of all those that have or do take the last Parliamentary Protestation." From this time Burton came out as an advocate of Congregational Independency, and something more. He objected to the parliamentary protestation as utterly inefficient against popery, and unjust towards such as dissented from the church of England on Congregational principles. Although he did not see his way clearly to a separation between church and state, yet he avowed his conviction that there was no scriptural warrant for a national church; and he demanded as a becoming concession, that if any national form of worship was established, the Independents should have perfect liberty to act separately according to their own views and practices. "Understanding," he says, "the Church of England to be none other than a National Church, it will be very difficult, if not rather impossible, to constitute it so as is agreeable, in all points, to a true and visible Congregation of Christ: for a Particular Church or Congregation, rightly collected and constituted, consists of none but such as are visible living members of Christ the Head, and visible saints under Him,

and Burton arrived at Charing Cross, the procession was most multitudinous. It is reported that there were about a hundred carriages having six horses a-piece, at least two thousand horse, and those on foot innumerable.. The spectacle was all the more imposing from the glare and flash of the torches and flambeaux, by which their progress was lighted up into the city, where, amidst the merry peal of church-bells, and the loud huzzas of the citizens they came to their lodgings. In March, 1641, they were liberated, adjudged "reparations and recompense," and Burton restored to "his former liberty of preaching." A New Discovery, etc., p. 110—145; Hanbury, ii. 51—53.

the one and only King of Saints; but so is it not with a National Church." Again; "as for the manner of Government of a National Church, because it hath no pattern in the Scripture now under the gospel, who can therein prescribe or advise anything?"

Such were the decided views of Burton respecting Congregationalism as opposed to Nationalism. He was, moreover, a confirmed voluntary, as the following words testify:—"Nor will the ministers and pastors of such Independent Congregations, look after any such wages as the parochial ministers challenge to themselves, as tithes, or the like. No, surely; they are, and will be, content that such competent maintenance as the members of their several Congregations respectively shall freely, without any compulsion, as is used in tithes, allow." Neither had he any doubt that, if the proper methods were used a great number of churches might be formed of the godly people in the land. "Blessed be God!" he exclaims, "here are many people already fitted to make up holy assemblies or churches. Well then, let it be the first degree of Reformation, to begin and call forth all those into several congregations, who are fitted and who desire to draw near to Christ in a holy communion with Him in the purity of his ordinances. And thus let God's Word run and have a free passage."*

Although it is evident that Burton had made great progress in his views by this time, it does not appear that he had any decided convictions respecting the duty of parliament in reference to religion. Hence the hesitancy with which he expresses himself on

* According to the testimony of Bishop Hall, in a speech in the House of Lords, there were at this time at least eighty "Congregations of Sectaries," in London.

the subject. "If a state," he says, "will set up a National Church, wherein many things, out of reason of State, are tolerated and prescribed for order's sake, as they call it, and if there be such a necessity—necessity hath no law! But let not this exclude and bar out the free use of such Congregations, as whereof the spiritual commonwealth of Israel consisteth." Again:—"The Parliament now being about a Reformation,—what Government shall be set up in this National Church; the Lord strengthen and direct the Parliament in so great and glorious a work. But let it be what it will, so as still a due respect be had to those Congregations and Churches which desire an exemption, and liberty of enjoying Christ's ordinances in such purity as a National Church is not capable of; and whatever liturgy, or ceremonies, or discipline, are left to accompany this National Church-government, it is indifferent with us, so we may enjoy our Christian liberty in the true use of such ordinances, and of such Independent Church-government as Christ, the only Law-giver of his Church, and Lord of the conscience, hath left unto us in his Word."

In order to obviate the objection that Independency might lead to all kinds of error, in consequence of the liberty connected with it,—an old objection which still holds many back from the primitive pattern,—he goes yet further in his concessions. "First," he says, "the Independent Churches have Christ's law to regulate them: secondly, they have that law of Christ, which is, by love to serve one another: they have the law of association and confederation with other churches, to consult, advise, and confer with, in matters of doubt or question; and if, after all other remedies, any be obstinate in his or their errors, they

are liable to excommunication either in the same Congregation, if it be a particular person, and the error great; or from other Churches, if the whole Congregation have offended, and do stiffly maintain a dangerous error, which yet is rarely seen in a well-constituted Congregation, consisting of meet members. And if, at any time, such a thing should fall out, which cannot grow but from some root of apostacy, particular or general; if the offence do reflect also upon the laws of the Civil State, which are made against known heresies, or blasphemy, or idolatry, and the like, the offenders are obnoxious to the Civil power: so little fear there is that any Independent Congregation, or any member thereof, should be exempt from condign censure, where just cause is given, either Ecclesiastical or Civil."

In all this, it must be admitted, Burton took a very moderate view of the claims of Independency on parliament. He followed, in fact, the New England Way, and lagged behind many of his brethren, baptist and pædo-baptist, in London and elsewhere. Although a Congregational Independent and something more, he did not comprehend the political bearing of his own principles; and would have been satisfied with any decision come to by parliament, involving exemption and toleration for himself and his party. In this view many if not most of the Congregational Independents joined; especially those who returned to England during this period, as we shall see more clearly in another chapter. Modest, however, as were the pretensions of "the Protestation Protested," its effect on the public mind, and on the religious parties of the day, was very great. It hit the mark. It taught the parliament,—although against its will,—

that the compendious and negative legislation they had attempted would not prove satisfactory under existing circumstances.* It opened many eyes to see the amount of evil that lurked under the shadow of the hierarchy, and the herculean labour needful to its removal; and thereby put fresh energy into the question respecting the propriety of continuing it at all. While Lord Brooke, John Milton, and others, were engaged in polemic strife with the episcopalians,† Burton used his season of popularity

* In July, 1641, the Commons had half assented to a semi-episcopal, semi-presbyterial, and demi-semi-economical scheme of national church government, after the plan of Archbishop Usher, which came to nothing. The presbyterians and episcopalians winked at it from opposite sides, in hope that it would keep the Independents out. Some very grave writers, Baxter amongst others, have blamed the Independents for opposing this *moderate* scheme. There can be little doubt that the bishops themselves put an end to it, by *their* "protestation" in December, which Heylin calls "the last flash of their dying light." There can also be little doubt that, carried into effect, it would have proved an organized tyranny—an ecclesiastical spider's web, embracing the whole kingdom, with an ecclesiastical spider at every angle of the complicated mesh, and a whole bevy of them in the centre. Appendix B.

† During the course of this year (1641) Milton wrote, first, his "Reformation in England, and the causes that have hindered it;" then his "Prelatical Episcopacy;" after that "The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty, in two books;" and, lastly, his "Animadversions upon the Remonstrants' Defence against Smectymnuus." The last but one was written in confutation of Usher's scheme of episcopacy, and is replete with splendid passages. It contains also the celebrated passage in which Milton promises some great poetical work, at a future period. The last mentioned was a rejoinder to Usher's reply to five presbyterians who had written against Bishop Hall, under the signature of Smectymnuus. This last word is composed of the initials of the five ministers, Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas

most conscientiously in protesting against the first rash act of parliament in reference to religion. No doubt the "prudent" members of both houses thought his publication ill-timed, if not somewhat presumptuous, since it was opposed to the results of their deliberative wisdom; but there can be little hesitation in affirming that his resistance was manly and salutary. The members of both houses were more convinced than before that it would not be prudent to legislate on ecclesiastical matters without great caution; and some petitions requesting them to call a synod, more especially one from the London Ministers in December, led them to the determination which ultimately issued in the Assembly of Divines.*

Still "The Protestation Protested" was unfavourably received by great numbers both in and out of parliament. Like the touch of Ithuriel's spear, it revealed the fact that the demon of Intolerance was not laid.

"For no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness. Up he starts
Discovered and surprised. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid,
Fit for the ton some magazine to store,
Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffused inflames the air:
So started up in his own shape the fiend."†

Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow. In this year also, William Bagshawe, member for Southwark, published his Readings in parliament on the Canons of the Church of England, and the legal bearings of the statute of premunire. Bagshawe was a lawyer of high standing in the Middle Temple, and his readings were a great blow to the hierarchy. See extracts from them in Hanbury, ii. 140—146.

* It may here be observed, that Burton was never summoned to that assembly. The reason is obvious.

† Paradise Lost, iv. 811—819.

Some petitions, sent up to the House "for a Toleration of some Congregations to enjoy an Independent Government," were coldly received; and, according to an anonymous contemporary, "all the industry that they used, could not save that book, 'The Protestation Protested.'"* Episcopalians and presbyterians vented their spite upon Burton and the parties in whose behalf he put in his humble plea. The latter, in particular, were specially wrathful. They had a scheme on foot, to which we have already referred; and if we may, with a little stretch of imagination, compare this parliament to the virgin and innocent "mother of all living," they were, at this period, not altogether unlike her artful enemy:—

"found,
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits ingend'ring pride."†

Some of the London ministers were already coquetting with the General Assembly of Scotland,‡ and looking to them not only for counsel, but for that influence which they and their army might give to presbyterian principles. Amongst those who attacked Burton and the Independents was a Mr. Edwards, immortalized by Milton as "shallow Edwards," and celebrated yet further in being confuted by an antagonist of the other sex. His treatise was entitled, "Reasons against the Independent Govern-

* Hanbury, ii. 107, note c.
† Paradise Lost, iv. 799—809.
‡ July, 12, 1641.

ment of Particular Congregations: As also, against the Toleration of such Churches to be erected in the kingdom. Together with an Answer to such Reasons as are commonly alleged for such a Toleration. etc." Copious extracts from this plea for persecution will be found in Hanbury's Memorials.* There are passages which show that the Independents were by no means a small body; and that their influence, especially that of the New England section, was very considerable. But we refer to it mainly for the purpose of introducing a few passages from the treatise of Edwards's opponent. It is cheering to find that "the women of England," were in a great measure alive to the important principles at stake in the conflict of that period; and that while the sex, usually deemed the weaker, were more valorous for truth and right at Bristol than the men, the same sex in London were more than a match in solid argument for the presbyterian "forcers of conscience." The following is the title of the work to which we now refer:—"The Justification of the Independent Churches of Christ. Being an Answer to Mr. Edwards his Book, which he hath written against the Government of Christ's Church, and Toleration of Christ's Public Worship: Briefly declaring, That the Congregations of the Saints ought not to have Dependency in Government upon any other, or Direction in Worship from any other, than Christ, their Head and Lawgiver. By Katharine Chidley."

Let the following show how far this fair polemic understood the question at issue, between the Congregational Independents and the Synodical Presbyterians:—

* Vol. ii. pp. 101—108.

"In the particular congregation of Colosse, Paul beheld a comely 'order,' notwithstanding there were no Synod consisting of any but only the members and ministers of that congregation. Now, if you can show us in the Scriptures any general command, that all the churches should, or any example, that all the churches did, gather a Council of some ministers out of every particular congregation, to make Decrees or Laws to impose upon the whole, then you will speak something to the purpose; but as yet, you have not spoken one word that proveth any such thing. And whereas you allege that Scripture, that 'The spirits of the prophets' must 'be subject to the prophets;' I answer, That that is given to particular congregations, and therefore not to all in a province or nation, and so not to Synods. The church of Jerusalem did nothing without the counsel of the Spirit; neither determined of anything that was not written in the Scripture. So the churches of God now ought to presume to do nothing but what the written Word allows them; being taught the true meaning thereof by the Spirit that God hath given them."

Again; with reference to fellowship of churches ecclesiastically Independent in the primitive age:—

"Now whereas you say, this Independent Government 'cannot be in a Christian Commonwealth or Nation;' I do affirm it may stand with Christ's church in a Commonwealth; as may plainly appear in the first three chapters of the Revelation, which testify that there were 'seven churches in Asia;' and these seven churches were compared to 'seven golden candlesticks,' and every candlestick stood by itself and held forth her own light; as appears by those several messages which were sent to those 'seven

churches.' For had they had a dependency one upon another in respect of power, then one message would have served unto them all; and what sin any of the 'churches' or 'angels' were guilty of, would have been laid unto the charge of all the churches and angels; but we see it was otherwise. As for instance, there was none charged for suffering the woman Jezebel to teach the people to 'commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols,' but the angel of Thyatira; by this, you may plainly see there was not one angel set over them all; nor one Synod appointed to judge and correct them all; which is the thing you labour for! Yet it cannot be said, that the Independency of these seven churches hindered their Communion either with Christ their Head, or one with another; neither was it any disturbance to the Commonwealth, or Nation, wherein they lived. And here, you cannot say, that I have evaded, but have answered you directly, to these your doubts and suppositions; and to many of your 'ifs' which have been your spies sent out in this scout. And moreover, I will answer all your many 'Reasons' as I come to them; though they be joined in battle with these!"

Edwards had argued, that toleration would rob fathers and guardians of their authority. The following meets the case:—

"Oh that you would consider the text in 1 Cor. vii. which plainly declares that the wife may be a believer and the husband an unbeliever! But if you have considered this text, I pray you tell me, What 'authority' this unbelieving husband hath over the conscience of his believing wife? It is true he hath authority over her in bodily and civil respects, but

not to be a lord over her conscience. And the like may be said of fathers and masters. It is granted that the king hath 'power,' according to the law, over the bodies, goods, and lives, of all his subjects; yet it is Christ, the King of Kings, that reigneth over their consciences. And thus you may see, it (toleration) taketh away no 'authority which God hath given' to them. The Court of Parliament, to whom you submit for judgment, may easily see that good members both for churches and commonwealths, may issue out of such families that live under Christ's Government; and that such families may be good nurseries both for church and commonwealth."

The next passage must not be omitted, on account of its historical importance:—

"You affirm that 'these Independent men, where they have power, as in New England, will not tolerate any churches or Government, but in their own way.' In using the word 'these,' you carry the matter so darkly, that I know not whom you mean, for you have named none. But you seem to say, they be men that 'have power' in New England.—I answer, Indeed it may happen to be so; that there may be some men there that take upon them authority to bind men's consciences, as you and all your fellows do here. But if it have been so, I think it was because they had, here in England, taken upon them an Oath of Conformity; as you have sometimes done; and, because the tyranny of the Prelates was so mighty against all good men, that they were fain to go away privately, and so had not time or opportunity publicly to disclaim this their Oath. And then, there might be fear, that upon complaint made for disorder committed there, in suffering the liberty of the Gospel there;

which could not be admitted here; they might have been sent for back by their Ordinaries, and so have been committed to some stinking prison here in London, there to have been murdered, as divers of the Lord's people have been of these late years, as I am able to prove of my own Knowledge. And if they have banished any out of their Patents that were neither disturbers of the peace of the land, nor the worship practised in the land, I am persuaded it was their weakness; and I hope they will never attempt to do the like. But I am still persuaded they did it upon the same ground, that having knowledge in themselves that their former Oath might be a snare unto them if they did not hold still some correspondency with the practice of England, even till God should open a way or means for them to seek free liberty for all by the approbation of Authority."

There is wit, as well as sound reasoning, in the following:—

"But now, methinks, I hear you boast very much of yourself and others of your Church . . . You cannot choose but 'out-preach them,' if you preach them out of the kingdom! And it is very like you may 'outlive them' also, if you can but banish them into some hard country, or else get them into some stinking prison, as you, and the rest of your father's house, have done very lately.

"You say, 'whilst they were in the Church of England, they preached often, and now seldomer.' I answer, It is very like they dare not tell such as you when they preach, that cry out to the Parliament to disturb their meetings. Further, you say, 'they go looser in their apparel and hair.' I answer, I know some, indeed, that have been constrained to change

their 'apparel' for fear of persecution; and, it may be, the 'hair' you were offended at might be some periwig, which some of them have been constrained through fear to put on, to blind the eyes of the Bishop's blood-hounds when they have come to take them. It is no marvel though their 'spirits' grow 'narrow' towards such an adversary as yourself; and great cause they have to be 'strange' towards you, and 'reserved,' and 'subtile' also. But whereas you say, 'their churches be narrow:' I say, they are even like the way to heaven, or the gate that leadeth unto life, which is so 'narrow' that such as you can hardly enter in thereat! And because Christ's flock is a 'little' flock, therefore you imagine they are not honoured of God; which is very carnal reasoning."

After this manner did noble-hearted women plead the cause of the separatists, when men with the accents of liberty on their lips were seeking their extermination. While we honour the memory of Katharine Chidley, the disinterested champion of the persecuted, we should not forget the fact disclosed in her writings, as well as in other records of the period, that Episcopalian and Presbyterian were alike bent upon having *some* species of national establishment at this time; that the Independents had not the most distant idea of having their system established; and that while many of their number would have been pleased if parliament had determined to separate entirely and for ever between church and state, the utmost extent of their published demands was to have the privilege of an unmolested worship and fellowship, according to their own convictions.

CHAPTER VII.

INDEPENDENCY AND THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE CIVIL WAR.—1642—1643.

In approaching the period when the variance between king and parliament led to a civil war, we might have contented ourselves by simply recording the fact, as our ecclesiastical writers are wont to do in reference to civil matters, and have passed on to the special subject of our history. Such a summary method, however, does not appear to us altogether satisfactory. The Independents have been mixed up with the quarrel, and charged with many of the evils attending that season of strife and bloodshed; and unjust aspersions have been cast on their principles, as the necessary consequence of a false view of the actual part which they took in the prolonged struggle. Their views and conduct as citizens have been strangely confounded with their views as religionists; and, therefore, it seems indispensible that a fair statement should be made of the actual causes of the war, and of the position of the Independents, and of their principles (for they are perfectly separable things), in relation to it.

Without entering into minute details of the purely civil history, we propose to state, in the first place, the circumstances in which the war originated; and afterwards the connexion of the Independents with it,

in their two-fold capacity, as citizens and as a religious party.

As we saw in our last chapter, a petition was presented to Charles on the 1st of December, 1641, in which the parliament requested the removal of the bishops from the House of Lords.* On his majesty's refusing the request, the populace became angry, and annoyed the spiritual lords on their way to and from the House. In consequence of this violence, the bishops addressed a petition to the king, declaring that they could not attend in their places without peril of their lives, and protesting against all proceedings in the House of Peers during their absence. It is probable that the king advised them to take this step, in order to further the royal project of revoking all that had been done by parliament, on the ground of its not being free. Such, at least, was the use which his majesty made of the protest; for on the 30th of December he sent it to the upper house, through the Lord Keeper. From that moment the fate of the bishops was sealed. The Lords resented the protest as a breach of privilege, and sent a message to that effect to the Commons, who immediately impeached the offenders of high treason, and committed them to the Tower.

Charles treated the matter coolly, having a further scheme in view. On the following day, the Commons sent a message to the king, requesting a guard for the purpose of protecting them during their deliberations. No answer was returned until the 3rd of January, when the request was refused. Alarmed by this circumstance, and by some rumours which came to their ears respect-

* See back, p. 209.

ing the king's intentions, the Commons ordered the lord mayor and sheriffs to keep the London militia on foot, and to place strong guards at all the city outlets. On the same day the king's secret was out. Herbert, the attorney-general, entered the House of Peers in the king's name; accused Lord Kimbolton, Hampden, Pym, Holles, Strode, and Haselrig, of high treason; required the appointment of a committee to examine into the charges; and demanded that the persons of the accused should be secured.

The Lords were taken by surprise. Lord Kimbolton rose at once, and declared his readiness to meet the accusation in a public manner. A message, stating what had taken place, was sent to the Commons, who, however, had already got information of the fact, as well as that the king's officers were sealing the papers of the impeached members. The Commons at once made an order that the serjeant-at-arms should break the seals, and arrest the officers; and then requested a conference with the Lords.

While these arrangements were being made, the serjeant-at-arms presented himself in the king's name, and required Mr. Speaker to place in his custody the five members. The speaker ordered him to retire. With great composure the House appointed a deputation to wait upon his majesty forthwith, and inform him that such a message called for deliberation; that the five members should be forthcoming to answer any legal charge in a legal way; and repeating their request for a guard. The king promised an answer on the morrow, and the House adjourned.

Next day, when the Commons had assembled, information arrived that the king was on his way from Whitehall, with three or four hundred armed attend-

ants, to arrest the five members in person. Before he arrived, the members had withdrawn at the request of the House, and had conveyed themselves into the city for protection.* When the king entered the House, he found, as he expressed it, that "the birds had flown;" and after stating the purport of his visit, and announcing his determination to have them wherever he could find them, withdrew amidst cries of "Privilege! Privilege!" On this the House adjourned.

The manœuvre of the king had failed. His design, —in a great measure the result of the queen's evil counsels,†—was, to have secured the leaders of the parliament and of the people, and then to have overawed the rest. From this moment, the war was virtually commenced. The steps taken by the king were illegal; and if they had not been so, a higher principle than that of law came into operation, and taught the parliament to take care of itself, and of the nation then confiding in its protection, against an hereditary but despotic monarch. Whatever the professions of Charles after this attempt to secure the power in his own hands, the parliament was no longer under any moral obligation to treat him otherwise than as a detected enemy of the public good.

After his return to Whitehall,‡ the king resolved on a course of action consistent with the duplicity of his nature. His confidants recommended him to

* Strode alone refused immediate compliance with this request. He was entreated and pressed by his fellow-members, but in vain. At last his friend Sir Walter Earl pushed him out, just before the king arrived.

† Madame de Motteville's Mem. i. 265.

‡ The queen was waiting for him, counting the moments as they passed, watch in hand. We can imagine her disappointment. Ibid.

follow up the attempt to seize the members, by immediately repairing to the city for the purpose; and some of them volunteered to do it for him, in his name. But the city was up in arms, and resistance might be offered. He therefore rejected this advice, and determined to wipe off the reproach of his "warlike entrance" into the House, as the Commons afterwards described it, by repairing to the city unattended, and demanding in that inoffensive manner the surrender of the impeached members. He did not expect to accomplish his professed object; but he hoped to effect another, at that moment more important. On his way to Guildhall he was unmolested; but cries of "Privilege of Parliament! Privilege of Parliament!" saluted his ears; and on his way back a pamphlet entitled, "To your tents, O Israel!" was thrown into his carriage. The scheme of conciliation would not answer. Common sagacity taught all parties that it was a mere trick; and the most vulgar mind reasoned thus: that if the king could go into the city unarmed, he might have gone in the same manner to the House of Commons, had his intentions been peaceable.

This happened on the 5th of January. On the same day, the Commons voted the king's intrusion a breach of privilege, and that they could not deliberate in freedom without a trusty guard. They appointed a Committee of Inquiry and Protection to establish itself in the city, and then adjourned for six days. In the city the utmost enthusiasm was displayed on behalf of the parliament; the committee of inquiry was under the protection of a strong guard at the Guildhall, and all the forces and services of the corporation were placed at its disposal. On the 11th, parliament

re-assembled; the five members coming by water, escorted by sailors, train-bands, and eight pieces of cannon. As Hampden stepped from his barge, he was received by four thousand mounted gentlemen and freeholders of Buckinghamshire, who afterwards presented petitions against papist lords and evil counsellors, and in favour of their representative. Along each bank of the river, marched the militia under the brave Skippon, bearing the last declaration of parliament on the end of their pikes. All was enthusiasm. It was the hey-day of young liberty's first enfranchisement. The Commons were virtually the governing power from that time.

The remaining incidents in the opening up of the great tragedy may be briefly told, although much has been written respecting them.

The Commons vindicated themselves from the stigma Charles had endeavoured to cast upon them, by various measures. They brought the Lords to a nearer union with them, and after much dilatory correspondence with the king,* who left Whitehall for Windsor, resolved upon taking the militia under their own superintendence. The two chief magazines for arms and warlike stores, namely, the Tower and Hull, were secured to them, in the king's name. Meanwhile petitions poured into the House from all parts, counties, and classes, and from both sexes; the burden of their prayer being ever the same, namely, the reform of the church, the chastisement of the papists,

* Hyde, afterwards Lord Clarendon, and author of the "History of the Rebellion," so severely characterized by Hallam, drew up the king's answers to the Commons, while retaining his seat in the House. Never lived more recreant statesman; never wrote more palpably and designedly false historian.

and the suppression of the malignants or royalists. Charles tried to obtain possession of Hull twice; but failed in both attempts. Sir John Hotham, the governor, refused to yield to the Earl of Newcastle, in the first instance, and to the king himself in the second. This last refusal occasioned much angry correspondence between the king and the leaders of the parliament. The latter conducted their paper warfare with as much discretion as they had exhibited in their previous measures.

At length, the king determined to raise his standard at Nottingham. On the 23rd of August, at about six o'clock in the evening, attended by about eight hundred cavaliers and a body of militia, he ascended the hill which overlooks the town; there to execute his purpose of summoning his subjects to arms. The war was in fact commenced already, and blood had been shed on both sides; but Charles appeared to consider the ceremony of proclamation necessary to the institution of hostilities. The incidents which occurred in connexion with this formality, although trivial in themselves, were regarded by many as ominous to the royal party. The proclamation was in the hands of the herald, who had already commenced reading it, when the king took it from him, and altered the wording of several passages on his bended knee. The herald then proceeded with his task; not without some difficulty, on account of the corrections. After this the trumpets sounded, and the royal standard was advanced, bearing the inscription,—"Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's." The latter part of the scripture passage, —"but unto God the things that are God's,"—was omitted, as not comporting with Charles's notions of

kingly supremacy. After some hesitation, the standard was fixed on the tower of the castle, amidst gathering clouds, and under a frowning sky. During the night the weather grew stormy, and the winds of heaven puffing against the mutilated motto of a king, blew it down. "Why did you put it there?" said the affronted monarch, "It should have been set up in an open place, where every one might have approached it!" There was no need on this score for so much irritation. Unhappily, it soon became notorious enough that Charles the First had plunged into a war with the parliament and people of England.

From these facts it is abundantly evident that the civil war was the result of the king's attempt to rule as an arbitrary monarch. Whatever may have been the importance attached, on both sides, to the possession of authority over the militia; a previous question remains to be answered, in order to decide upon the origination of the contest. This question is: Why was parliament unwilling that the supreme power should be lodged in the hands of the king? It is nothing to the purpose to affirm, that Elizabeth and James had acted in an arbitrary manner towards their subjects, without involving the nation in intestine strife. The people proved their ripeness for liberty in Charles's day, by the patient manner in which they endured his unconstitutional government from 1628 to 1640, and no less afterwards (when in the arrangements of a retributive providence, Charles was compelled to summon a parliament against his will), by the firm manner in which they pressed forward to secure themselves from evil government in future. Self-preservation is the law of nature. The measures of the Commons were nothing more than the succes-

sive results of the operation of that law: and if they became extreme and extraordinary at last, the fault must be laid on the original aggressor. The law concedes the justice of such procedure, in individual cases. If a man takes away the life of his fellow man in defending himself against a murderous attack, he is justified in his deed. Much ingenuity has been wasted by constitutional historians and others in attempting to bring the conduct of the two contending parties to the test of national laws. Such methods of historic criticism, (philosophy, they can hardly be called,) seem frivolous in a question of this nature. Let the philosopher of the nineteenth century put himself in the position of the parliament of 1642, and then say what that parliament should do. To recede before such a monarch as Charles had already proved, would have been to betray the liberties of the people; to advance against such a monarch as Charles, necessarily involved all the ensuing consequences. What patriot would have hesitated to adopt the alternative chosen by parliament?

We now proceed to answer the question, respecting the manner in which Independency and the Independents were implicated in the struggle thus commenced. That at a later period they had much to do with it, no one can deny. But our present inquiry relates to the commencement, and not to the unforseen issues of the war.

It is evident, then, after what has been advanced above, that the contest between the king and his people, originated on purely civil grounds. Religious differences undoubtedly existed, and the course of parliamentary legislation was concerned to a great extent with matters of a religious nature; but these

were not the turning point of the conflict. If Charles had not attempted to seize the five members, and afterwards to obtain possession of the supreme power by fraud and force, the Commons would never have proceeded to extremities. Let their defenceless condition at the period of the attempted seizure, bear them witness. Without guard, without auxiliaries of any kind to render them assistance, beyond what the people might have afforded by a sudden rising in their favour; they would have been at the mercy of the king, had he been successful in the accomplishment of his project. But from that time they saw the danger they were in, and provided against it.*

It must be conceded, then, that Independency, as a form of religious opinion, had nothing whatever to do with the causes of the civil war. So far from this, the Independents were the smallest minority in parliament; and their principles were opposed not merely by the sentiments of the great body of the members, but by the various enactments of the legislative body. Some time after the civil war had commenced, as we shall have occasion to show in a succeeding portion of our history, the measures of parliament proceeded on principles directly at variance with those of the most moderate of the Congregationalists. The spirit of Nationalism, which led the House to frown upon those petitions which Burton's celebrated tract had elicited from the separatists, reigned triumphant for a long season, and was scarcely to be subdued afterwards by the victorious arms of Cromwell. When the bare idea of granting a toleration to the Independents, was a bugbear in the eyes of both houses, it

* See Milton's views respecting the conduct of Charles in Appendix C.

is not likely that any thought of ascendancy for their party should enter into the thoughts and plans of the Independent leaders.

If it be asked, then, in what capacity Lords Brooke and Say, Hampden, St. John, and Cromwell, engaged in the warfare; the answer is, unquestionably, as patriots, and as patriots alone.* No doubt their peculiar principles, no less than their piety, sustained their patriotism, and inspired them with singular courage, in a cause felt to be just. But they had no ends in view, other than those which the members of parliament and the people of England generally pursued. They contributed in every way to the defence of the nation against a despotic king; and having less superstition than most men, entered upon their enterprise with more undivided energy and zeal than the rest of the popular party. But this is the utmost that can be said of the connexion between their Independency and their patriotism.

It is gratifying to know that amongst the Independents of this period were to be found, not only

* All thus named became Colonels or Captains of Infantry in the army of 1642; the Earl of Essex being "Lord General for King and Parliament," and the Earl of Bedford General of the Horse. On the 15th of August, Cromwell seized the magazine in the castle of Cambridge, preventing the University from sending its plate, to the value of £20,000, to the aid of Charles. On Sunday, 23rd October, the battle of Edghill was fought. During the ensuing winter, various "Associations" were formed between contiguous counties, for purposes of mutual defence against the royalist forces under Prince Rupert and others. Lord Grey of Wark commanded the Eastern Association, which included Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, and Herts. All the associations but this fell to pieces. Wither, the poet, became a captain on the parliament's side. Appendix D.

the foremost patriots, ready to risk their lives in defence of the hearths and homes of England; but also the best expounders of the rights of subjects against those who would act the part of tyrants, contrary to acknowledged laws and the constitution of the body politic. If the writings of Milton had descended to us as the only bequest of that age, we should have had ample reason for the grateful acknowledgment of our obligations to the genius of Independency, which prompted our great poet to lay aside his "garland and singing robes" for a season, in order to "teach the age to quit its clogs," and assume the exercise of its just liberties. But Milton was not the only great thinker and writer who was thus moved. Before him, in the earliest period of the civil war, two of those whom Laud prevented from repairing to New England, but who found a home for a season in Holland, and afterwards returned to their own country, espoused the cause of parliament and of popular right. While Brooke, Hampden, and Cromwell, were contending with the sword, Burroughes and Bridge,—the one of Stepney, and the other of Great Yarmouth, and both Independents,—were doing equal execution with the pen.* The writings of Bridge are specially worthy of notice, as giving the last home-thrust to the unscriptural and despotic doctrines of the high church and prerogative party. We therefore proceed to lay a few extracts from them before the reader.

* Herle also should be mentioned. He and Burroughes both replied to Dr. Ferne, to whom reference is made further on. Burroughes' reply was in two sermons, entitled, "The glorious name of God, the Lord of Hosts, etc." 1643.

In order to comprehend the force of Bridge's reasoning, it should be understood that one of the Canons passed by the Convocation of 1640, as if in anticipation of the Civil war, forbade "Subjects to bear arms against their King, offensive or defensive, upon any pretence whatsoever;" on the ground that such conduct would be "to resist the powers which are ordained of God." Moreover, one of the instructions issued to the clergy by Laud was to the effect, that they should "exhort their people not to speak of his Majesty's power in any other way" than in that Canon was "expressed." Dr. Ferne, one of the court clergy attending upon the king, published a treatise on the same subject in 1642, at the commencement of the civil war, hoping to catch some tender consciences in his theological snare. Bridge replied to his work in the same year, satisfying tender consciences, that they might and ought to espouse the side of the parliament in the contest then begun. Dr. Ferne published a rejoinder, urging the same argument again, only with more vehemence, and attacking Bridge with some degree of power. Upon this, without loss of time, Bridge published his final reply, entitled, "The Truth of the Times Vindicated: whereby the Lawfulness of Parliamentary Proceedings in taking up of Arms is Justified, etc." This treatise abounds with proofs of Bridge's extensive reading, and logical acumen. No doubt he had studied the subject well, and had found in the writings of Suarez of Spain, Althusius of Friesland, as well as Paræus, and the more celebrated Grotius, abundant materials for guiding his judgment.* His work is divided into six chapters. The first is on

* For an account of these writers, see Appendix E.

the nature of government. In this he shows that the people are the source of legitimate power. In reply to Ferne, who sets up monarchy as the original and only divine institution, he says:—

"I cannot but wonder at the conceit, seeing the difference between the government of the Judges and Kings is so abundantly made out. Surely, God, at the first, by all we can read in the Scripture, was pleased to appoint Magistracy itself, and left the children of men free to set up that way and form of government which, in prudence, might best correspond with their condition; still making the People the first subject and receptacle of civil power. In proof whereof I have stayed the longer, it being the foundation of all this controversy. Therefore, the Prince, or supreme magistrate, hath no more power than what is communicated to him from the community, because the effect doth not exceed the virtue of its cause. So, the People. or community, cannot give away from themselves the power of self-preservation. Therefore no act of a community can cut off this entail from their posterity, or make such a deed of conveyance whereby themselves and their children should be spoiled of self-preservation. Then, in case the Prince doth not neglect his trust, so as not to preserve them, but to expose them to violence, it is no usurpation for them to look to themselves; which yet may be no act of jurisdiction over the prince, or taking away of any power from him which they gave him, but is, in truth, a stirring up, acting, and exercising, of that power which always was left in themselves."

He then, in the second chapter, brings the argument, thus advanced, to bear upon the condition of England:—

"If it be said, that this People are as a people merely conquered, then any sword that is longer than the prince's may fetch back that power again. If it be said, that this People gave away this power by indenture, at the first election of their prince, then let men show us such indenture. If it be said, that God hath forbidden such a forcible resistance by Rom. xiii. 1—3, or the like Scriptures, then it must be affirmed that the Parliament are not 'the highest powers,' which Dr. Ferne granteth. For if the Parliament come within the compass of those words 'higher powers,' then that Scripture, Rom. xiii., doth not reach them; but rather requires others to be obedient to them: yea, if by the 'higher powers' is understood only the King, then the two Houses may not make any forcible resistance against any petty constable that comes in the King's authority to do violence to the two Houses. Surely, therefore, this and the like Scriptures are much abused; the meaning being only to command obedience to authority in all things that tend to the encouragement of good, and punishment of evil: and therefore there is such a power in the Subjects, both by the law of nature and constitution of the Kingdom, to take up Arms, when the State, or two Houses, express it; notwithstanding the expression of any one man to the contrary."

In the next chapter, he refers to the opinions of divines on the subject of controversy, and shows how many of the most famous were in favour of the popular view:—

"'Of the French and Low Country Divines, he brings no testimony,' saith the Doctor; 'but, for proof, tells us, we know their practice; so I, for answer, may return him his own words, we know what hath been the practice of those Protestants, and so

they are parties interested not so fit to give in witness.' Very well; if they be 'parties interested,' and so not fit 'to give in witness,' then they are of our judgment! Observe, Reader, here he granteth that the Protestant Churches, and the Divines of France and the Low Countries, 'are parties interested,' and so of our judgment; what Protestant Churches or Divines, then, will he allege for his sentence? Will he have the Divines of Switzerland? I brought a testimony of the Divines of the Council of Basil: and that he doth not contradict! Are the Divines of Geneva of his mind? I brought the testimony of Calvin; that he saith nothing to, but it passeth with him as granted by him! Are the Divines of Scotland? I brought him the testimony of Master Buchanan; that testimony also he doth not deny! It may be that was but one, and so would not take notice of it; read, therefore, what Master Knox saith, and what the judgment of the Scots' Divines is for the present. But it may be the Doctor will tell us that the Scottish Divines are also 'parties' and 'interested' in the cause. Very good: we shall shortly have a great party in the Protestant Churches for us, and with us; what Divines, then, are against us, in the Doctor's opinion? Are the Divines of England? He tells us, also, 'Yet do some of them allow of Resistance, in some cases.' Good, still: by and bye it will arise to somewhat; here is yet more of our party,—as the Doctor calls them,—by his own confession! As for the testimonies I have brought, of Dr. Bilson and Dr. Willet, he saith, 'that is plain, they speak of such government, such states, such cases, as will not agree to this kingdom, at this time.' But why not, the Doctor will not tell us! When the Doctor, or other, bring forth

testimonies of Divines, ancient or late, to prove that Subjects may not take up arms against their Prince, they had as good say nothing; that is not to our case: but let them prove by testimonies, that it is not lawful for the Parliament to take up arms to secure the kingdom, to bring accused persons to trial, and to deliver the Prince out of the hands of Malignants; and then they say something to us, else it is but clamour, not reason."

The following passage from the sixth chapter, shows that the parliamentarian party had not overlooked the contingency of the king's receiving a mortal wound in the battle, and knew how to regard such an event, were it to happen. It also speaks a word in behalf of the Brownists, so called:—

"We say, if a shot of our artillery had fallen on the king,—whereas you say, we 'would have found him guilty of his own death,'—we say we would have found you and such as you are, guilty thereof, that put him on such designs! But in this matter, Doctor, you have answered yourself; for you told us in your former treatise, 'That it is lawful for subjects to ward their Prince's blows, to hold his hands and the like.' Now, if the Prince raise an army against his Subjects, how can his blows be warded off but by an army? And then answer yourself, 'What if a shot of artil-should fall upon your Prince?' . . . 'But who knows not,' saith the Doctor, 'if that party of Brownists and Anabaptists which are now so prevalent in the arms taken up against the King, should get the upper hand, what would become of the King's supremacy and government?' Here is a loud cry against 'Brownists and Anabaptists;' but who are 'Brownists?' Not all those that are against Prelates, and not for the Eng-

lish Common Prayer Book; for then, all the Reformed Churches are Brownists."

The following, our last extract, is not to be omitted, inasmuch as it confirms all that we have advanced respecting the moderate views of the Independents in relation to their own mode of church government; as well as respecting the causes of the civil war:—

"In the next section, the Doctor saith, 'Mr. Bridge enters upon a loose discourse against Episcopal government.' No other 'loose discourse' than what his loose treatise led me into. And whereas I said, now the Doctor shows himself: he had rather the Kingdom should be imbrued in a bloody war, than Episcopacy should down, because he had said in his treatise, 'that the King has reason, by power of arms, to divert the abolishing of Episcopal government;' the Doctor answers, 'Nay, Mr. Bridge, you and your party in arms show yourselves what spirit you are of, who will have this land embroiled in a bloody war, rather than Episcopacy shall not down.' Not so, Doctor! There is not the same reason why you should retort these words upon us; for I had nowhere said, the Parliament hath reason, 'by power of arms,' to divert the evil of that government; yea, I am so far from it, that I profess freely that if the King and Parliament would establish that government still to be continued, that the People is not bound to rise up in arms to root it out, though I judge it evil. Yea, if any man be of that opinion, I think he is to be suffered to live, enjoying himself and his estate here! Good Sir! in the fear of God, make your humble addresses to his Majesty, and petition him to return to those that are faithful to him. The worst that he can lose, you know,—if you pretend rightly,—is but a piece of some prero-

gative, or some exercise thereof, for the present. Why should so good a land as this be imbrued in blood for such a cause?"*

A correct opinion may be formed from these extracts, respecting the reasons which moved the Independents, equally with the presbyterians and others, to engage in the civil war. When Charles assembled his hosts at Wellington in September, he informed his followers that they would meet with "no enemies, but traitors; most of them Brownists, Anabaptists, and Atheists." Although such a statement was known to be false, it afterwards proved unexpectedly that the parties whom he sought to stigmatize by these names were not the least formidable amongst his foes. The following sentiments, expressed by the patriotic Milton, a few years after, were those of the parliament and people in general, and deserve still to be cherished by all who love their country.

"No man, who knows aught, can be so stupid as to deny, that all men naturally were born free, being the image and resemblance of God himself, and were, by privilege above all the creatures, born to command, and not to obey: and that they lived so, till from the root of Adam's transgression, falling among themselves to do wrong and violence, and foreseeing that such courses must needs tend to the destruction of them all, they agreed by common league to bind each other from mutual injury, and jointly to defend themselves against any, that gave disturbance or opposition to such agreement. Hence came cities, towns, and commonwealths. And because no faith, in all, was found sufficiently binding, they saw it needful to ordain some authority, that might restrain by force and

* For the above extracts, see Hanbury, ii. 190—197.

punishment, what was violated against peace and common right. This authority and power of self-defence and preservation being originally and naturally in every one of them, and unitedly in them all; for ease, for order, and lest each man should be his own partial judge, they communicated and derived either to one, whom for the eminence of his wisdom and integrity, they chose above the rest, or to more than one, whom they thought of equal deserving; the first was called a king; the other, magistrates: not to be their lords and masters, (though afterward those names in some places were given voluntarily to such as had been authors of inestimable good to the people,) but to be their deputies and commissioners, to execute, by virtue of their intrusted power, that justice, which else every man by the bond of nature, and of covenant must have executed for himself, and for one another. And to him that shall consider well, why among free persons one man by civil right should bear authority and jurisdiction over another; no other end or reason can be imaginable.

"It is thus manifest, that the power of kings and magistrates is nothing else, but what is only derivative, transferred and committed to them in trust from the people to the common good of them all, in whom the power yet remains fundamentally, and cannot be taken from them, without a violation of their natural birthright.

"Secondly, that to say, as is usual, the king hath as good right to his crown and dignity, as any man to his inheritance, is to make the subject no better than the king's slave, his chattel, or his possession, that may be bought and sold.

"Thirdly, it follows, that, to say kings are account-

able to none but God, is the overturning of all law and government.

"It follows, lastly, that since the king or magistrate holds his authority of the people, both originally and naturally for their good in the first place, and not his own; then may the people, as oft as they shall judge it for the best, either choose him or reject him, retain him, or depose him though no tyrant, merely by the liberty and right of freeborn men to be governed as seems to them best. This, though it cannot but stand with plain reason, shall be made good also by Scripture, Deut. xvii. 14, " When thou art come into the land, which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations about me." These words confirm us that the right of choosing, yea, of changing their own government, is by the grant of God himself in the people.

" We may from hence with more ease and force of argument determine what a tyrant is, and what the people may do against him. A tyrant, whether by wrong or right coming to the crown, is he who, regarding neither law nor the common good, reigns only for himself and his faction; thus St. Basil among others defines him. And because his power is great, his will boundless and exorbitant, the fulfilling whereof is for the most part accompanied with innumerable wrongs and oppressions of the people, murders, massacres, adulteries, desolation, and subversion of cities and whole provinces; look how great a good and happiness a just king is, so great a mischief is a tyrant; as he the public father of his country, so this the common enemy. Against whom what the people lawfully may do, as against a common pest, and destroyer of mankind, I suppose no man of

clear judgment need go further to be guided, than by the principles of nature in him. But because it is the vulgar folly of men to desert their own reason, and shutting their eyes, to think they see best with other men's, I shall shew by such examples as ought to have most weight with us, what hath been done in this case heretofore."*

In this manner did the great men of that day fortify their minds against all pusillanimity in the serious business in which they were engaged. The Commonwealth found amongst the Independents her most able servants in every department of labour and of peril. While a Milton felt, as he expressed it, "that he ought not to be wanting to his country in a crisis of so much danger;" a Cromwell, with more energy still, was carrying the tide of war before him, in every direction. Thus the fable of Andreæ was realized; the sword and the pen were both consecrated to the service of the Commonwealth. "For that only is a happy country where the pen and the sword are faithful servants, not where either governs by its arbitrary will."†

With this exposition of the political principles of the leading Independents of the period, we conclude our present chapter. The season of war does not prevent the strife of parties. It remains to be seen how it fares with the men and their principles in the long struggle that ensues.

* The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates. Milton's Prose Works, pp. 233, 234.

† Hallam's Introduct. to Lit. of Europe. Vol. iii. p. 349.

APPENDIX.

ADVOCATES OF LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE CITED BY THE BAPTISTS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

[NOTE A. p. 43.]

THE following citations form Chapter VIII. of "an Humble Supplication to the King's Majesty," published in 1620. The work is attributed to John Murton, by the editor of the Tracts on Liberty of Conscience. We give the chapter entire, without the foot-notes, that the reader may see how far the baptist Independents, of the period referred to in the text, were willing to acknowledge their obligations to their predecessors in the cause of religious liberty. The chapter is entitled, "Persecution for cause of conscience is condemned by the ancient and later writers, yea, by puritans and papists." We omit the usual marks of quotation, for the sake of convenience.

Hilary against Auxentius, saith thus : "The Christian Church doth not persecute, but is persecuted; and lamentable it is to see the great folly of these times, and to sigh at the foolish opinion of this world, in that men think by human aid to help God, and with worldly pomp and power to undertake to defend the Christian church. I ask of you bishops, what help used the apostles in the publishing of the Gospel? With the aid of what power did they preach Christ, and convert the heathen from their idolatry to God? When they were imprisoned and lay in chains, did they praise and give thanks to God for any dignities, graces, and favours received from the court? Or, do you think that Paul went about with regal mandates, or kingly authority, to gather and establish

the church of Christ? Sought he protection from Nero, Vespasian?" &c.

"The apostles wrought with their hands for their own maintenance, travelling by land and water, from town to city, to preach Christ; yea, the more they were forbidden, the more they taught and preached Christ. But now, alas! human help must assist and protect the faith, and give the same countenance. To and by vain and worldly honours do men seek to defend the church of Christ, as if he by his power were unable to perform it."

The same against the Arians: "The church now, which formerly by enduring misery and imprisonment, was known to be a true church, doth now terrify others, by imprisonment, banishment, and misery, and boasteth that she is highly esteemed of the world; whereas the true church cannot but be hated of the same."

Tertullian ad Scapulam. "It agreeth both with human equity and natural reason, that every man worship God uncompelled, and believe what he will; for another man's religion or belief neither hurteth nor profiteth any man: neither beseemeth it any religion to compel another to be of their religion, which willingly and freely should be embraced, and not by constraint: forasmuch as the offerings were required of those that freely, and with a good will offered, and not from the contrary."

Jerome in Proem. lib. 4. in Jeremiam. "Heresy must be cut off with the sword of the Spirit; let us strike through with the arrows of the Spirit all sons and disciples of misled heretics, that is, with testimonies of holy Scriptures: the slaughter of heretics is by the word of God."

Brentius on 1 Cor. iii. "No man hath power to make or give laws to Christians, whereby to bind their consciences; for willingly, freely, and uncompelled, with a ready desire and cheerful mind, must those that come, run unto Christ."

Luther, in his book of the civil magistrate. "The laws of the civil government extend no further than over the body or goods, and to that which is external: for, over the soul God will not suffer any man to rule, only he himself will rule there: therefore, wheresoever the civil magistrate doth undertake to give laws unto the soul and consciences of men, he usurpeth that government to himself which appertaineth to God," &c.

The same upon 1 Kings, vi. "In the building of the temple there was no sound of iron heard, to signify that Christ will have in

his church a free and willing people, not compelled and constrained by laws and statutes."

Again, he saith upon Luke xxii. "It is not the true catholic church which is defended by the secular arm or human power, but the false and feigned church; which, although it carries the name of a church, yet it denieth the power thereof." And upon Psalm xvii. he saith, "For the true church of Christ knoweth not *brachium seculare*, the secular arm, which the bishops now-a-days chiefly use." Again in Postil. Dom. i. post. Epiph. he saith, "Let not Christians be commanded, but exhorted; for he that will not willingly do that whereunto he is friendly exhorted, he is no Christian: therefore those that do compel them that are not willing, show thereby that they are not Christian preachers, but worldly beadles."

Again, upon 1 Peter iii. he saith, "If the civil magistrate would command me to believe thus or thus, I should answer him after this manner;—Lord, or Sir, look you to your civil or worldly government, your power extends not so far, to command anything in God's kingdom, therefore herein I may not hear you: for if you cannot suffer that any man should usurp authority where you have to command, how do you think that God should suffer you to thrust him from his seat, and to seat yourself therein?"

The puritans, as appeareth in the Answer to Amonition to Parliament, "that papists nor others, neither constrainedly nor customably communicate in the mysteries of salvation." Also in their supplication, printed 1609, much they write for toleration.

Lastly, the papists, the inventors of persecution; in a wicked book lately set forth, thus they write: "Moreover, the means which Almighty God appointed his officers to use in conversion of kingdoms and people, were, humility, patience, charity, &c., saying, *Behold, I send you as sheep in the midst of wolves.* He did not say, 'I send you as wolves among sheep, to kill, imprison, spoil, and devour those unto whom they were sent. Again, he saith, *They* to whom I send you *will deliver you up in councils, and in their synagogues they will scourge you: and to presidents and to kings shall you be led for my sake.* He doth not say, 'You whom I send shall deliver the people, whom you ought to convert, into councils, and put them in prisons, and lead them to presidents and tribunal seats, and make their religion felony and treason.' Again, he saith, *When ye enter into the house, salute it, saying, Peace be to this house.* He doth not say, 'You shall send pur-

suivants to ransack and spoil the house.' Again, he saith, *The good pastor giveth his life for his sheep; the thief cometh not but to steal, kill, and destroy.* He doth not say, 'The thief giveth his life for his sheep, and the good pastor cometh not but to steal, kill, and destroy,' " &c.

So that we holding our peace, our adversaries themselves speak for us, or rather for the truth.

Tracts on Liberty of Conscience, 218—224.

ORDER AND FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT VOTED IN 1641.

[NOTE B. p. 241.]

THE following order, voted by the House of Commons, on Friday, July, 16, 1641, will speak for itself.

"Imprimis: every shire of England and Wales to be a circuit or diocese for the ecclesiastic jurisdiction, excepting Yorkshire, which is to be divided into three. II. A constant Presbytery of twelve divines to be selected in every shire or diocese. III. A constant President to be established as a bishop over this Presbytery. IV. This bishop in each diocese to ordain, suspend, deprive, degrade, excommunicate, by and with the consent and assistance of seven divines of his Presbytery then present, and not otherwise. V. The times of Ordination throughout the land to be four times every year; namely, the 1st of May, the 1st of August, the 1st of November, and the 1st of February. VI. Every bishop constantly to reside within his diocese; in some prime or chief city or town within his diocese, as in particular. VII. Every bishop to have one special particular Congregation, to be chosen out of the most convenient for distance of place from his chief residence, and the richest in value that may be had; where he shall duly preach, unless he be lawfully hindered, and then shall take care that his Cure be well supplied by another. VIII. No bishop shall remove or be translated from the bishopric which he shall first undertake. IX. Upon every death or other avoidance of a bishop, the King to grant a 'congé d'elire,' to the whole clergy of that diocese; and they to present three of the Presbyters aforesaid, and the King to choose and nominate whom he please of them. X. The first Presbyters of every shire to be named by the Parliament; and afterwards, upon the death or other avoidance of any Presbyter, the remaining Presbyters to choose another out of the Parish Ministers of that shire, and this to be done within one month next

after such death or avoidance. XI. No bishop or clergyman to exercise or have any temporal office, or secular employment; but only for the present to hold and to keep the probate of Wills, until the Parliament shall otherwise resolve. XII. The bishop once a year—at Midsummer—to summon a Diocesan Synod, there to hear and, by general vote, to determine all such matter of scandal in life and doctrine among the clergymen as shall be presented unto them. XIII. Every three years, a National Synod to be; which, for persons, shall consist of all the bishops in the land, and of two Presbyters, to be chosen by the rest out of each presbytery, and of two clerks, to be chosen out of every diocese by the clergy thereof. XIV. This National Synod to make and ordain Canons of the government of the Church, but they not to bind until they be confirmed by Parliament. XV. Every bishop to have over and above the Benefice aforesaid, a certain constant rent allowed and allotted, proportionate to the diocese wherein he is to officiate; that is to say, every Presbyter to have a constant yearly profit above his benefice. XVI. As for the revenue of the 'Bishops, Deans, and Chapters, &c.,' a strict survey to be taken of all their rents and profits, and at the same time to be represented at the beginning of our next Convention; and in the meantime no lease to be renewed, nor timber to be felled."—Hanbury, II. 138, 139.

MILTON'S VIEW OF THE ATTEMPT TO SEIZE THE FIVE MEMBERS.

[NOTE C. p. 259.]

In the third part of his answer to Dr. Gauden's Eikon Basilike, Milton thus expresses his sentiments respecting Charles's attempt to seize the five members :—

"If to demand justice on the five members were his plea, for that which they with more reason might have demanded justice upon him, (I use his own argument,) there needed not so rough assistance. If he had 'resolved to bear that repulse with patience,' which his queen by her words to him at his return little thought he would have done, wherefore did he provide against it with such an armed and unusual force? but his heart served him not to undergo the hazard that such a desperate scuffle would have brought him to. But wherefore did he go at all, it behoving him to know there were two statutes, that declared he ought first to have acquainted the parliament, who were the accusers, which he refused to do, though still professing to govern by law, and still justifying his attempts against law? And when he saw it was not permitted him to attaint them but by a fair trial, as was offered him from time to time, for want of just matter which yet never came to light, he let the business fall of his own accord; and all those pregnancies and just motives came to just nothing."

"What a becoming sight it was, to see the king of England one while in the House of Commons, and by and by in the Guildhall among the liveries and manufacturers, prosecuting so greedily the track of five or six fled subjects; himself not the solicitor only, but the pursuivant and the apparitor of his own partial cause!"

"'That I went,' saith he of his going to his House of Commons, 'attended with some gentlemen;' gentlemen indeed! the ragged infantry of stews and brothels; the spawn and shipwreck of taverns and dicing houses: and then he pleads, 'it was no unwonted thing

for the majesty and safety of a king to be so attended, especially in discontented times.' An illustrious majesty no doubt, so attended! a becoming safety for the King of England, placed in the fidelity of such guards and champions! happy times, when braves and hacksters, the only contented members of his government, were thought the fittest and faithfullest to defend his person against the discontents of a parliament and all good men! Were those the chosen ones to 'preserve reverence to him,' while he entered 'unassured,' and full of suspicions, into his great and faithful counsel? Let God then and the world judge, whether the cause were not in his own guilty and unwarrantable doings: the House of Commons, upon several examinations of this business, declared it sufficiently proved, that the coming of those soldiers, papists and others, with the king, was to take away some of their members, and in case of opposition or denial, to have fallen upon the House in a hostile manner. This the king here denies; adding a fearful imprecation against his own life, 'if he purposed any violence or oppression against the innocent, then,' saith he, 'let the enemy prosecute my soul, and tread my life to the ground, and lay my honour in the dust.' What need there more disputing? He appealed to God's tribunal, and behold! God hath judged and done to him in the sight of all men according to the verdict of his own mouth: to be a warning to all kings hereafter how they use presumptuously the words and protestations of David, without the spirit and conscience of David."—Milton's Prose Works, p. 283, 284.

GEORGE WITHER, THE PURITAN POET.

[NOTE D. p. 200.]

THE following account of Wither is taken from Bell's English Poets. Notwithstanding the party spirit of the writer, it is correct as to facts.

"George Wither was born on the 11th of June, 1588, at Bentworth, near Alton, in Hampshire, and was of the family of the Withers of Manydowne, near Wotton St. Laurence, in the same county. He received the rudiments of his education under John Greaves, a schoolmaster of some note, and was sent to Magdalen College, Oxford, about the year 1604, where he was put under the tuition of John Warner, afterwards bishop of Rochester. His inclination, however, diverting his thoughts into other channels, he made so small a proficiency in the studies to which his attention was directed, that after an interval of three years he was taken home by his friends, and sent to learn the law; first in one of the inns of Chancery Lane, and afterwards in Lincoln's Inn. But nature had made him a poet; and frustrated all these well-meant designs. While he was nominally studying the law, he wrote several pieces, which, being circulated among his friends, soon acquired him a flattering reputation. These were called his Juvenilia. They were afterwards lost. In 1612 he published two pieces relative to the death of Prince Henry; and in 1613 his *Abuses Stript and Whipt, or Satirical Essays, in Two Books*. For this poem, which reflected severely on the royalists, he was committed to the Marshalsea, and imprisoned there for several months. This temporary martyrdom established his fame with his own party, and he thenceforth became the great poetic and pamphleteering oracle of the puritans, the more ignorant portion of whom looked upon him as a prophet, and fancied that they saw many things taking place as he was supposed to predict them. Possessing an intimate knowledge of human nature, and remarkable penetration and foresight, he

frequently made allusion to 'coming events' with so much sagacity, that the vulgar readily attributed his ratiocinations to divine inspiration, especially when they appeared to be so exactly fulfilled.* From 1613, he continued to pour out his thoughts, in prose and verse, on all passing political and popular subjects with extraordinary fecundity. Wither was in verse as fertile, as courageous, and as indomitable, as Prynne was in prose, and although he did not fill so large a space in the public mind, he became equally obnoxious to his antagonists. They were both continually writing in open defiance of threats and punishments. Prynne had his ears cut off, and Wither was several times imprisoned. But these penalties did not abate his zeal for 'the cause.' He tells us, in his Britanuia's Remembrancer, published in 1628, that he had been imprisoned three times already, but that he felt called upon to speak his mind; that all he had suffered was only calculated to 'prepare him for this worke;' and that,

——'Therefore, neither all the graces
Of Kings, nor gifts, nor honourable places,
Should stop my mouth, nor would I smother this.
Though twenty Kings had sworn that I should kiss
The gallows for it: lest my conscience should
Torment me more than all men living could;
For I had rather in a dungeon dwell
Five years, than in my soul to feel a hell
Five minutes.'

His career was as fiery and reckless as his poetry. In 1639 he joined the expedition against the Scots, in which he held the rank of captain of horse, and quartermaster-general of a regiment. The progress of public events now put his puritanical zeal to the test, and in 1642 he became so enthusiastic that he sold his estate, and raising a troop of horse with the purchase-money, he joined the camp of the Parliamentarians. The motto on his colours was *Pro Rege, Lege, Grege*: 'for the King, the Law, and the People.' He was immediately made a captain, and soon after a major; and conducted himself with so much credit that the Parliament gave him Sir John Denham's estate at Egham in Surrey."

* All this is Mr. Bell's invention. The puritans believed no such thing of George Wither, neither did he wish them to do so.

THE POLITICAL PRINCIPLES OF SUAREZ, ALTHUSIUS, PARÆUS, AND GROTIUS.

[NOTE E. p. 262.]

SUAREZ of Granada, although of the school of Loyola, was the precursor of Grotius and Puffendorf. His work *De Legibus* "on Laws," exhausts the subject, according to the notions of the early part of the 17th century. The celebrated sentence in Hooker's first book of the Ecclesiastical Polity,—commencing with "Of Law no less can be said than that her throne is the bosom of God, etc."—is taken from this work. He was the first to explode the patriarchal theory of Government. Such an opinion respecting civil magistracy, he says, has neither authority nor foundation; "This power belongs to no one man, but to a multitude of men." The Jesuits of Granada put to the blush the Court divines of England.

John Althusius was a native of Germany; but dedicated a work on politics to the states of West Friesland, in 1615. In this work he argues that the estates of a kingdom have the right to resist a tyrant. In his dedication he lays down the principle that the supreme power or sovereignty *(jus majestatis)* resides in the people, and may not be alienated.

Paræus, the well-known Calvinistic theologian and casuist, incurred the censure of the University of Oxford in 1623, for some passages in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans. He held that inferior magistrates might defend the state even by arms against the sovereign, under certain circumstances.

The celebrated Hugo Grotius published his work *De jure belli et pacis* on "the law of war and peace," in 1625. He lays down the principle of non-resistance on the part of subjects; but with many imitations. For example, he denies the right of the sovereign to revoke his own contracts, as Charles had done; and affirms that subjects may claim, if not enforce, their fulfilment. "He also observes," says Hallam, "that if the sovereignty be divided between the king

and part of his subjects or the whole, he may be resisted by force in usurping their share (as Charles had done), because he is no longer sovereign as to that; which he holds to be the case, even if the right of war be in him, since that must be understood of a foreign war, and it could not be maintained that those who partake the sovereignty have not the right to defend it; in which predicament a King may lose even his own share by the right of war."

These and many other writers had, no doubt, been seen by Bridge in Holland. For a general account of the history of political philosophy and jurisprudence up to this period, see Hallam's Introduction to the Literature of Europe. Vol. I. III.

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"Hail! happy spirit, hail!
Celestial, heaven born guest!
Sharp, sudden was the gale,
That wafted thee to rest:
Awhile the waves impetuous rushed—
A moment's tossing, all was hushed!

"Methinks I see thee now
In yonder ransomed throng;
Amidst the seraphs bow,
And join the sacred song;
See thee approach Immanuel's throne,
Before his feet to cast thy crown!"

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	Matt.	Mark.	Luke	John
"On Saturday (the Sabbath) Pilate sends At Jews' request, a guard to watch the tomb,	xxvii,	xvi,	xxiv,	xx
Which now is closed by a large stone, and sealed. But on the day succeeding, Christ revives And leaves his prison. Mary Magdalene Thither repairs with spices, but she finds The stone removed, and the great captive fled Peter and John she brings to view the place: They quit, but Mary stays; and Christ appears In his new state to her the first of all."	xxviii,	xiv,	xxiv,	xx

Printed by Ward & Griffith, Bear-alley, Farringdon-street, City.